



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,786

FRIDAY 4 DECEMBER 1998

(IR50p) 45p



Why a station in orbit is a waste of space **FRONT**

IN THE **FRIDAY REVIEW** + MUSIC

Hague faces leadership crisis as five more peers join rebellion



10.30am
Lord Fraser of Carmyllie
Confirms he has resigned as Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Lords



2.27pm
Lord Pilkington of Oxenford
Spokesman on education and employment says he has resigned



2.27pm
Lord Bowness
Spokesman on environment, transport and regions confirms he has resigned



2.27pm
Earl of Home
Spokesman on trade and the Treasury confirms he has resigned



3.44pm
Baroness Strange
Announces she has resigned and joined the independent peers

WILLIAM HAGUE faced a crisis of confidence in his leadership of the Conservative Party last night as a rebellion by Tory peers over his decision to sack Lord Cranborne as their leader.

Four Tory frontbench spokesmen resigned yesterday in protest at Lord Cranborne's dismissal, and a backbencher defected from the party to join the independent crossbenchers. Mr Hague's allies admitted that further resignations were possible.

Another day of dramatic developments at Westminster left even some MPs loyal to Mr Hague admitting that his credibility had been badly dented by his rejection of a compromise plan for Lords reform.

The scheme, drawn up by crossbench peers and endorsed by Lord Cranborne and Tony Blair, would renege 91 hereditaries until the Government introduced wider reform of the second chamber. Despite Mr Hague's initial hostility to the agreement, it is expected to go ahead next year as part of the Bill to remove the right of the other 650 hereditaries to sit and vote in the Lords.

BY ANDREW GRICE AND COLIN BROWN

Although Mr Hague vowed to maintain the Tories' opposition to the measure, ministers said last night he looked impotent because of the widespread support among his own peers for the compromise plan.

Senior Tories were trying to bridge the growing divide between the party in the Commons and Lords, which some described as historic.

Mr Hague's hopes of containing the rebellion were dashed as Lord Fraser of Carmyllie resigned as deputy Tory leader in the Lords, saying he felt "disgusted and appalled" at the dismissal of Lord Cranborne.

"I'm just bewildered by what happened and I just don't understand the basis on which Robert Cranborne was sacked," he said.

Then three other frontbenchers joined the rebellion: Lord Bowness, the environment spokesman; Lord Pilkington of Oxenford, who spoke on education; and the Earl of Home, a trade and industry spokesman and son of the former Tory

prime minister Sir Alec Douglas Home. Lord Pilkington criticised Mr Hague's climbdown, in the face of the revolt by his peers, to accept the main elements of the compromise plan. Despite sacking Lord Cranborne for negotiating the deal, he had now accepted it in the cold light of day. He urged other frontbenchers to "examine their consciences."

"The Lords are leaping every hour," one minister said. A Tory MP admitted: "To lose one peer is unfortunate, but to lose five is a disaster."

The rebellion caused such turmoil that the Tories said Mr Hague's new team in the Lords could not be named until next week. Despite an appeal for loyalty by Lord Strathclyde, the successor to Lord Cranborne as leader, Baroness Strange resigned from the Tory party and joined the ranks of the crossbenchers in protest. Asked if she would consider rejoining the Tories if Mr Hague resigned, she replied: "I should think about it."

Lady Strange, an hereditary peer, said: "I believe if you are a leader of a party you must support all those who are responsible for it. If you are not prepared to do that you are not the person to lead."

In the face of the revolt, Mr Hague wrote to the Prime Minister, warning him the Tories

would reject his attempt at "horse-trading", with the clear threat to carry on the "trench warfare" in the Lords. But the threat was dismissed with contempt by ministers last night. One said: "He can bluster, but he no longer has the troops."

Mr Blair will seek to increase Mr Hague's isolation in his own party by speeding "stage two" of the Government's Lords reforms. A Royal Commission to draw up proposals, to be set up early in the new year, will be asked to report in just 12 months instead of the two years originally envisaged.

Ministers say this could allow full-scale reform, turning the Lords into a partly elected

second chamber, to be approved before the next general election. It would also increase the prospects of an early referendum on proportional representation for House of Commons elections.

Ministers piled the pressure on Mr Hague by announcing the likelihood of avoiding "guerilla war" in the Lords over the hereditaries meant they will bring forward two key measures that were dropped from last week's Queen's Speech - setting up a Food Standards Agency and a Strategic Rail Authority to fulfil John Prescott's pledge to improve the performance of the privatised train companies.

Lord Strathclyde told peers that the Tories had suffered blows in the past 24 hours, but added: "When we have retired briefly to lick our wounds we shall return. Hydra-like, to be as effective and thorough in opposition as we always have been."

In his letter, Mr Hague accused Mr Blair of a "staggering U-turn". He wrote: "By putting forward a proposal to keep hereditary peers, you have completely abandoned the one



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Europe's banks cut rates in harmony

EUROPE'S CENTRAL bankers delivered an unprecedented synchronised cut in interest rates across the Continent yesterday in response to fears of a global economic slowdown.

It was in effect the first decision of the new European Central Bank, ahead of the launch of the euro on 1 January. The move means the Bank of England is now firmly expected to cut UK loan rates for the third time in three months after next week's meeting of its Monetary Policy Committee.

The unexpected European

BY DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

announcement therefore got a warm welcome from business and the City. Adair Turner, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), said: "It is the right action since inflationary pressures are minimal across Europe and the real danger is from a slowdown in growth."

Share prices in London surged ahead in anticipation of a pre-Christmas cut from the Bank of England. The Bank has

already knocked 0.75 percentage points off rates, taking them to 6.75 per cent, and a further move would cut the cost of mortgages again.

After yesterday's reduction of 0.3 percentage points, European interest rates stand at 3 per cent - except in Italy, where they have fallen to 3.5 per cent.

But the decision, led by Germany's Bundesbank, was not all good news. It reflected the bankers' concern about the risk of a serious economic downturn just as the euro is launched.

Michael Lewis, an econo-

mist at Deutsche Bank, said: "This was an unprecedented step. There is a slowdown under way."

However, Hans Tietmeyer, the Bundesbank's president, denied that the bank had been arm-twisted by politicians.

Both Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's new Finance Minister, and his French counterpart Dominique Strauss-Kahn, have made no secret of their desire to see interest rates fall. Neither wants the new European currency to be born into a serious recession on the Continent.

There was even greater concern in the financial markets about whether the series of interest rate cuts meant central bankers had reason to expect a fresh bout of global financial turbulence.

Yesterday the Brazilian stock market plunged after it became apparent that the country was unlikely to meet the terms of a new International Monetary Fund rescue package for its troubled economy.

The failure of the package might threaten further chaos of the kind that toppled Long Term Capital Management, a

speculative investment fund, in September.

Economists said flagging business confidence and pronounced weakness in European manufacturing amply justified the co-ordinated cuts in European interest rates.

"It's certainly not all gloom and doom, but what we're seeing is that the global slowdown is having a severe impact on goods-producing industries," said Ellen van der Gulik, an economist with JP Morgan in London.

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'Hague is looking like a man with the label "Caretaker" round his neck'

BY ANDREW GRICE
and COLIN BROWN

TONY BLAIR was the one who entered the Commons chamber with trepidation at 2.55pm on Wednesday for his weekly joust with William Hague at Prime Minister's Questions. He was convinced one issue would dominate the session: Whether Britain would be forced to sign up to a common tax policy throughout the EU.

This was a gift for Mr Hague. Exaggerated reports in Euro-sceptic papers that Britain could lose its freedom over tax had been given credibility by Oskar Lafontaine, the German Finance Minister, who called on Tuesday for Britain's veto to be scrapped. "We were on the ropes; we expected six questions... on tax. We couldn't believe what happened," said a member of Mr Blair's team.

Instead of attacking on Europe, Mr Hague sought to preempt the announcement to be made shortly in the Lords by the independent crossbench peers - that they had brokered a consensus plan for Lords reform acceptable to all parties. Mr Hague hoped that, by attacking Mr Blair's U-turn on removing all the hereditaries at once, it would be the Prime Minister who was on the defensive. He feared that, if he had raised the Euro-tax issue in the Commons, the Tories would have been on the back foot on Lords reform, as Mr Blair welcomed the crossbenchers' initiative and he rejected it.

Whatever his reasoning, even some loyalists in his shadow Cabinet privately concede the strategy fell apart. Publicly, they backed Mr Hague for showing "strong leadership" by sacking Lord Cranborne for negotiating with Mr Blair behind Mr Hague's back. But, as the rebellion by Tory peers spread yesterday, MPs were wondering whether Mr Hague had made a catastrophic error by removing the popular Lord Cranborne. Insiders suggested a parting of the ways with him was inevitable. Some sources said he had threatened to resign twice - once over Mr Hague's decision to maintain Tory opposition in the Lords to the Bill bringing in proportional representation for European Parliament elections and once over a separate dispute with Liam Fox, the Hague ally who is the party's spokesman on constitutional affairs.

But by firing Lord Cranborne Mr Hague has unwittingly widened the divide between the Tories in the Com-



William Hague leaving Conservative Central Office yesterday. His aides insist that he is unfazed by the brouhaha over his sacking of Lord Cranborne

Reuter

mons and Lords. "There was always a difference of view," said one peer: "Cranborne... treated Hague like the gardener on his estate. He used to say, 'Let Hague deal with it', as if he was one of his staff. That is the difference between the Tory hereditaries and the Tory leader. They think he is too lower middle-class."

Mr Hague's biggest sin, say Tory critics, was to accept the main elements of the deal Lord Cranborne had been negotiating. Some shadow ministers could hardly believe their eyes as they watched Mr Hague change his line on this during a grilling by Jeremy Paxman on BBC2's *Newsnight* on Wednesday.

For once, Mr Paxman cannot claim the credit. The reason an agreement that was unacceptable in the Commons seven hours earlier was now a concession to be pocketed was simple. Mr Hague knew he would face a massive Lords re-

billion if he ordered them to oppose the crossbenchers' reform plan. The more immediate problem was Mr Hague knew he would have trouble finding a credible leader of his Lords team to succeed Lord Cranborne if he insisted on opposing the consensus plan.

Lord Strathclyde, who offered his resignation with the rest of the Lords frontbench team, struck a deal with Mr Hague by which he would become leader only on condition he could back the crossbenchers' plan. "Hague was so desperate he had to give way," said a Tory source. "But it didn't look so good in the cold light of day. Everyone was asking why Cranborne had to be sacked if the deal was acceptable." Privately, Mr Hague knew his hopes of containing the rebellion would be dashed.

Lord Fraser, Lord Cranborne's deputy, had told him late on Wednesday he would resign out of loyalty to Lord Cran-

borne, and announced his decision yesterday.

There was worse to come: three more frontbenchers could not contain their anger - Lord Bowness (environment and transport); Lord Pilkington (education) and the Earl of Home (trade and industry).

Some peers were reassured by the soothing words of Lord Strathclyde at a meeting of Tory peers. But they were not enough for Baroness Strange, a backbencher who announced she was jumping ship to the crossbenchers. Criticising the Tory leader's handling of the affair, she said: "If you are a leader of a party you must consider all views. If you are not prepared to do that, you are not the person to lead."

She may not be the only Tory peer to resign and join the crossbenchers. Lord Weatherill, the former Tory speaker of the Commons, is the convener of the crossbench peers and said he was turning some Tories

away, asking them to think carefully before taking such a step.

The fiasco of the past 48 hours has renewed speculation at Westminster about whether Mr Hague will be ousted as leader before the next general election. As one Tory MP said, he looked like a leader with a "caretaker" sign hanging over his neck.

However, there is no permanent fixture waiting in the wings to take over. Michael Portillo and Chris Patten cannot run because they are out of Parliament; Kenneth Clarke is

out of tune with an increasingly Eurosceptic party.

Whatever the growing rumblings against Mr Hague, he would be extremely difficult to dislodge. To force a leadership contest, a group of anti-Hague rebels would have to get the signatures of 20 per cent of the party's MPs to request an election, and Mr Hague would then have to lose a vote of confidence before a contest were actually held. "We are stuck with him," a Tory grandee moaned last night. Mr Hague's aides insist he is unfazed by all the criticism. But the strains were

showing last night. Francis Maude, the shadow Chancellor, was in tetchy mood in a BBC radio interview in which he insisted: "Mr Hague is not going to go. He is decisively leader of the party." It sounded like the proverbial vote of confidence in the football club's manager just before he is sacked.

And last night there were growing numbers of Tory MPs - as well as peers - who grudgingly admitted Mr Blair's favourite taunt was right: Mr Hague is someone who gets every major strategic decision wrong.

TWO DAYS OF TORY TRAUMA

Wednesday

Mid-morning: Lord Cranborne telephones William Hague to confess that he has been negotiating behind the Tory leader's back.

Lunchtime: Cranborne meets with Tory front bench peers and secures their support.

3pm: Hague "reveals" Tony Blair's deal with Cranborne at Prime Minister's question time but it backfires on the Tory leader.

5.30pm: Hague calls for loyalty from the Tory peers, but they back Cranborne by four to one after a two-hour meeting.

6.30pm: Hague sacks Cranborne during a one-hour meeting.

7.30pm: Cranborne holds a press conference. "I behaved outrageously, but I would do the same again," he says.

Yesterday

8.10am: Hague on the ropes on BBC Radio Four *Today* programme after Tory MP Alan Clark says it was a "serious situation".

10.30am: Lord Fraser, Lord Cranborne's deputy, confirms that he has resigned from the front bench, followed by three other frontbenchers.

11.02am: Hague appoints Lord Macdonald of Argyll and Sutherland as the new deputy leader of the Opposition in the Lords and Lord Henley as new chief whip.

12pm: Hague sends a letter to Blair warning that the deal will not stop Tory guerrilla warfare.

2pm: In Committee Room 4 of the House, Lord Strathclyde makes an appeal for loyalty to a packed meeting of Tory hereditary peers.

2.27pm: Three other Opposition front bench spokesmen in the Lords quit - Lord Bowness, Lord Pilkington and the Earl of Home, the son of the former prime minister Alec Douglas-Home.

3.30pm: Lord Strathclyde in his first speech as Opposition leader in the Lords, says the Tories will lick their wounds but return "Hydra-like".

3.44pm: Baroness Strange, hereditary peer, confirms she has quit the Tory Party for the cross benches.

Lords hallways become a catwalk to survival

FOUR FAVOURED TO SURVIVE

EARL OF CARMARVON

A highly popular and able crossbencher, the seventh Earl of Carmarvon was a leading architect of the deal on House of Lords reform that split the Tories. Educated at Eton and a former lieutenant in the Royal Horse Guards, Henry Herbert is described by colleagues as "a truly solid chap". His friendship with the Queen led him to become her racing manager in 1969. Vital statistic: Thoroughbred Breeders Association 1964-66.



VISCOUNT CRANBORNE

Robert Cecil's family motto, Late But In Earnest, could apply to his fateful 11th-hour decision to back the Government's peace deal on House of Lords reform.

The heir to the Marquessate of Salisbury is no dry Parliamentarian. As an MP in the 1980s, he got so bored that he sneaked off to briefly join the mujahedin in Afghanistan.

Vital statistics: Fast-lane driver, fined £100 for speeding in 1983.



LORD LONGFORD

Loathed by the tabloids and loved by Kilroy for his friendship with Myra Hindley, Francis Longford, 93, is likely to be a victim of Labour's mass murder of the hereditaries. Lord Longford has had a remarkable career stretching back to chief assistant to Sir William Beveridge in 1941. He marked his 90th birthday by admitting he was a regular reader of *The Sun*, which him "the loopy lord". Vital statistic: First Lord of the Admiralty, May-October 1951.



LORD AVEBURY

Quirky could easily be one of the middle names of Eric Reginald Lubbock, the 4th Baron of Avebury and 7th Baronet of Lammars. The Liberal Democrat peer, 70, is

warmly regarded by his colleagues for his commitment to human rights issues, yet no amount of gravitas can shake off his reputation as a maverick.

Vital statistic: One of few peers to have worked for Rolls-Royce rather than to have owned one.



LORD MELCHETT

Peter Mond, the 4th Baron Melchett, is at 50 one of the youngest peers and a favourite in Labour's hereditary peer beauty stakes. He was a bright young minister in James Callaghan's government.

The executive director of Greenpeace UK, he can fairly claim an interest in animals to rival any real Miss England.

Vital statistic: Chairman, working party on pop festivals 1975-76.



MARQUESS OF BATH

The 7th Marquess of Bath is one of the most striking contestants in the race to stay on the red benches. Aged 66, he is fond of all things Sixties, from barefoot attire to Jacuzzi and a "kiss-couch" in his ancestral home. Is head of Longleat estate and its lions. Vital statistic: "Tarzan room" houses his children at Longleat. Father embraced fascism and had large collection of Hitleriana, still on display at the home.



THE HISTORIC Lords compromise worked out between Tony Blair, Lord Cranborne and the crossbenchers means that each party in the Upper House will decide which hereditary peers are to survive. Under the formula devised

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

behind closed doors over the past few weeks, 91 peers will be retained as part of a first stage of reform ahead of their eventual abolition. Each party will be

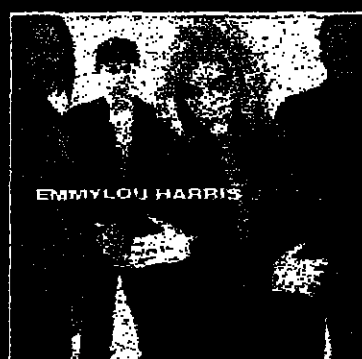
able to select survivors according to its strength in the Lords, leaving the Tories with 43, Labour two, Liberal Democrats three and Crossbenchers 28.

As it will be up to the peers themselves to make the selec-

tion it is likely that the most popular and colourful characters will win the day.

The next few weeks will see the thickly carpeted hallways of the Lords turned into a catwalk for those titled hopefuls desperate to hold on to their seats.

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Education: Blunkett offers package of incentives to help solve growing recruitment crisis in schools

High-flying teachers get boost in pay

GOOD SCHOOLTEACHERS will be able to earn an extra £2,000 a year in return for working longer hours, the Government announced yesterday.

They will be expected to take training courses outside term time, and some high-flying teachers could lose up to six weeks' holiday under proposals for the biggest shake-up in the teaching profession for 50 years.

Under the new scheme, announced by David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, all teachers will be offered a new proficiency test. If they pass, they will break through the present £23,000 pay ceiling for classroom teachers and could earn up to £35,000.

Mr Blunkett wants to ease a growing recruitment crisis by convincing graduates that teaching is a career with a future. He said: "For the first time in years, a commitment to invest in and reward teachers in return for a new professionalism is on offer."

The National Union of Teachers, the largest teachers' union, said that the performance-related pay scheme smacked of "cronyism and discrimination". The union has threatened strike action if pay is linked to exam results.

About £1bn will be spent on the scheme in its first two years: 2000 and 2001. The money will go to high-performing schools and individual teachers, and will depend, at least in part, on pupils' results. Some £60m will be given to heads of schools that show a constant improvement in exam results to give as bonuses to their best staff.

The bulk will go to individual teachers and will depend on a tough new appraisal system. Heads will assess teachers' performance, based partly on

BY JUDITH JUDD
AND BEN RUSSELL

THE MAIN POINTS

■ £2,000 a year extra for good classroom teachers who pass tough appraisal

■ £1bn for performance-related pay over two years

■ Schools that show consistent improvement to share £60m in bonuses

■ Heads, backed by external assessors, to decide who gets more, based on appraisal

■ High-flying head teachers to earn up to £70,000

pupils' results. External assessors will monitor decisions.

The paper insists, however, that this is no crude system of "payment by results".

Those who pass the test will receive an immediate pay rise of 10 per cent - up to £2,000. Mr Blunkett said that he expected most teachers would eventually qualify. At present just over half of the 440,000 schoolteachers are at or below the £23,000 pay ceiling.

All teachers will continue to receive annual cost-of-living increases and national agreements on teachers' working hours and holidays will remain.

Ministers are to consult on whether teachers who earn the extra money should have "different, more demanding contracts", but it is clear that these teachers will be expected to take training courses to update their skills outside school hours.

Fast-track graduates, who will reach £23,000 in four or five years instead of the usual

seven, will be expected to give up between four and six weeks of their holidays. They will also be used as "flying squads" to support failing schools.

There will be a new leadership scale for heads, who will be able to earn up to £70,000 a year.

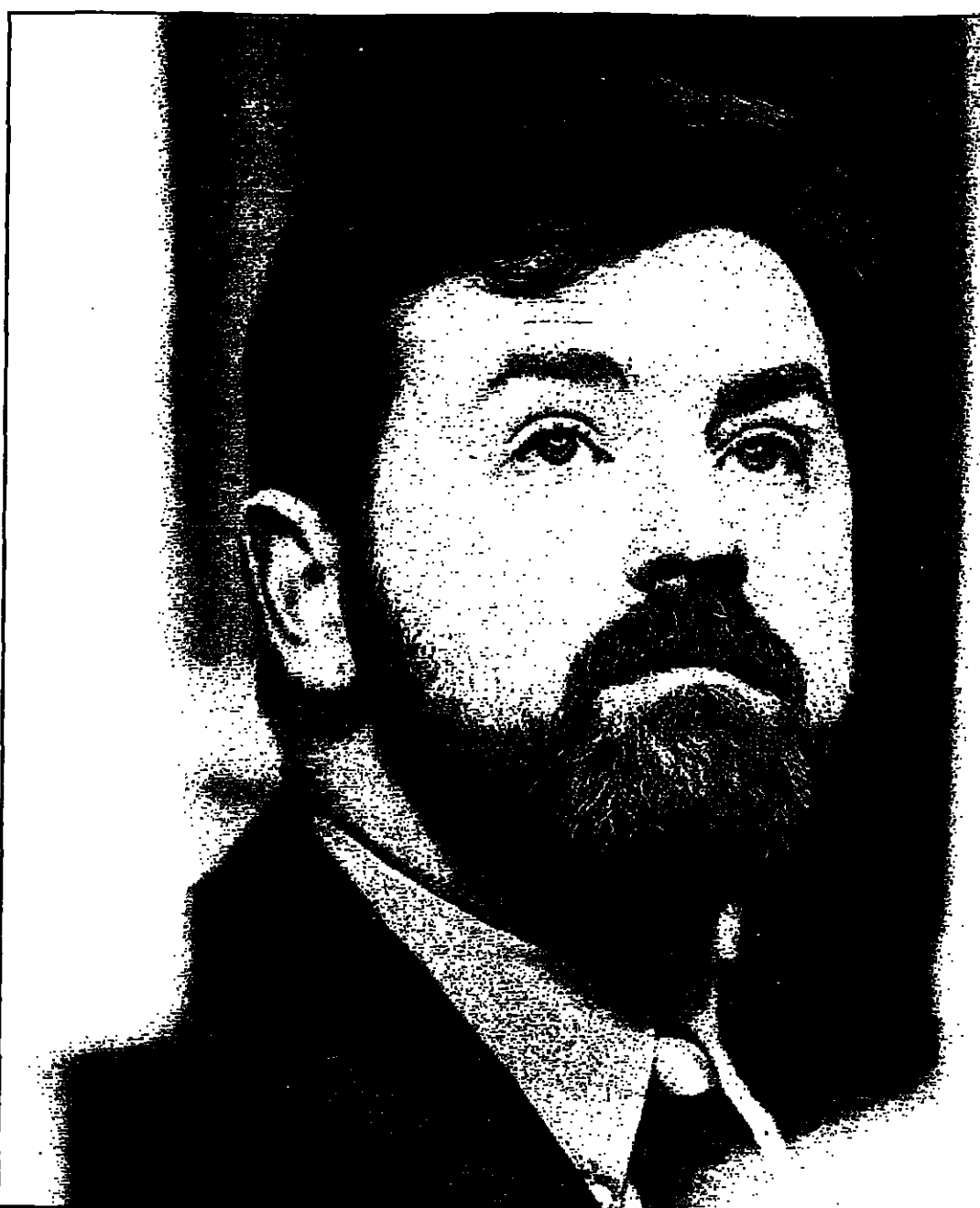
Doug McCauley, the NUT general secretary, said: "Whilst a package of measures is needed to address the recruitment crisis the profession now faces, the Government's emphasis on payment by results through performance-related pay will not achieve that and will be rejected by the profession. Any PRP is open to cronyism and discrimination."

But Graham Lane, education chairman of the Local Government Association, accused teachers' leaders of being "dinosaur-brained". He said: "There are only going to be two people who like this: the Government and local government. No one else will like it. That probably means it's a good idea."

"We want the teaching unions to cast off any idea of strike action because it's a very good package for teachers. Most teachers want an exciting profession. If they want to be up with industry, their conditions of service must reflect it."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said that the proposals "deserve serious consideration". He said: "Goals cannot be scored by standing on the sidelines. It is essential that teachers' organisations get stuck in and obtain a new pay structure which properly rewards the many good teachers in the profession."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, gave the paper a guarded welcome.



Gary Mitchell, a graduate with 10 years in the RAF, was put off teaching by the poor pay

Martin Rickett

Paying the price for experience

BY BEN RUSSELL

FORMER FLIGHT Lieutenant Gary "Mitch" Mitchell is the answer to David Blunkett's prayers. He is a trained design and technology teacher - one of the areas where there is an acute shortage of applicants of any kind - let alone good graduates with experience.

Mr Mitchell, 36, has a good degree and 17 years' experience in the RAF, working on electrical systems on air force Phantoms, Nimrods and Harriers across the world. He firmly believes teaching is the job for him. But when Mr Mitchell grad-

uated from Nottingham Trent University earlier this year, he could find no school willing to pay for his experience.

Faced with the prospect of a graduate's £14,000 a year salary, which would only rise to £23,000 after seven years' experience, Mr Mitchell turned his back on schools and started looking for a job in industry.

British Aerospace snapped him up. Mr Mitchell is now preparing to train Saudi air force staff in aircraft mainte-

nance. The salary: £33,000 a year.

Mr Mitchell, who has two children, said: "I do feel I have sold out for the materialistic world and it does make me feel a little guilty."

"When I was in the RAF I was involved in the Air Training Corps. There was a big sense of achievement when the kids were achieving things. I thought I would get the same sense of satisfaction from teaching."

"I gave up £25,000 when I left the air force. I knew I could go

into industry and get a job paying £20,000 or more straight away. I could have afforded to start on £14,000 but I would have struggled. There needs to be a more flexible pay structure and help to recreate the profession as it was years ago."

"When I said I was training to be a teacher, people said 'what do you want to do that for?'"

"It is not all about money. We need a teaching profession with status and a bit of kudos. I did not want to feel ashamed to say I was a teacher."

Crisis for the man who ate Christmas

BY LUCIE MORRIS

A MAN who has eaten Christmas dinner every day for the past five years is going on a diet after gaining almost four stone.

Forty-one-year-old Andy Park is seeking "urgent" medical advice on ways to combat his addiction to an all-day menu of festive treats, which includes mince pies, roast turkey and sherry. He now weighs 16 stone.

"I love living Christmas every day but I have got so big that I know I need help."

"I just want to cut down; there's no way I can give it all up altogether," Mr Park said yesterday.

The self-employed electrician, from Melksham, Wiltshire, first put up Christmas decorations during the summer of 1993 to "cheer himself up".

He now spends over £300 a week on Christmas food and at 3pm every day, watches a video of the Queen's speech. He wraps three presents for himself each night and leaves them under the tree in his lounge.

Each year, Mr Park consumes 104 turkeys, 200 tins of Quality Street and 260 Christmas puddings. He buys cut-price Christmas goodies in January and makes deals with his local butcher for cheap turkeys, which he cooks every three days. "Brussel sprouts are my favourite. I could eat bowls of them," he said.

His daily menu includes:

Breakfast: Two mince pies, one bowl of Christmas pudding and orange juice.

Mid-morning: Three mince pies and a glass of sherry.

Lunch: Turkey sandwich and chocolates.

Afternoon: More mince pies and a glass of champagne.

Dinner: Roast turkey dinner with all the trimmings and Christmas pudding.

A spokeswoman for Weight-watchers urged Mr Park to join his local slimming group, saying he needed to eat a more "balanced diet".

If Mr Park - who is hoping for singing stardom with a song about his unusual hobby, called "The Christmas Man" - starts dieting now, he could be back to his original weight by the millennium, she added.

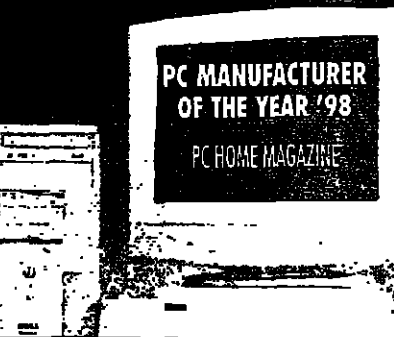
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Ulster's peace bid left on the brink

STALEMATE WAS snatched from the jaws of victory in the Northern Ireland peace process yesterday as a chance of making significant progress unravelled at the last moment.

Although all the signs are that agreement on the issues of new government departments and cross-border bodies will eventually be reached, serious slippage now seems inevitable in the timetable envisaged in the Good Friday Agreement.

The difficulty emerged in the late afternoon when First Minister David Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party announced that much more work was needed and this was unlikely to be concluded before the middle of this month.

This declaration dashed the hopes of Tony Blair and most of the other Northern Ireland parties that an agreement could be wrapped up by last night. Mr Blair had earlier spent seven hours in talks with the Stormont parties, which went on until 2am yesterday.

Until lunchtime yesterday the prevailing view at Stormont was that only details remained to be worked out before agreement was reached on the new administration's departmental structures and on new institutions to link north and south.

But in the afternoon Mr Trimble's party deputy, John Taylor, emerged after a meeting of Unionist Assembly members to dispel hopes that a resolution was imminent. He said: "I do not expect any conclusion tonight nor tomorrow and possibly well into next

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

week. I think we should all relax. It's going very nicely."

He added that, with Mr Trimble scheduled to fly to Washington today, there was little chance of having things finalised until his return on 14 December. A meeting of the Assembly is possible on that date, Mr Taylor said, but "it then will require a few weeks for Assembly members to have time to study the papers that are finally agreed".

The sudden change of mood and timetable raised suspicions of Ulster Unionist backbenchers unhappy with the emerging deal.

The Assembly is due to receive devolved powers in February, but this will require the passage of primary legislation through Westminster. The legislative process cannot start, however, until the shape of the new arrangements has been settled by the parties.

The Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, said: "There has been some measure of progress reached and now some people are in denial and seeking to move backwards. There is a moral and political responsibility on David Trimble as First Minister to conclude on all of these matters before he leaves."

Even before Mr Taylor's intervention, the Rev Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party had denounced the emerging new arrangements as a cave-in and a retreat, adding: "Most Unionists will find this utterly undemocratic, totally unfair and completely unacceptable."

'Mutineer' crew's tales of drink and sex



Members of the Atlantic Endeavour crew plan a second attempt at the record for rowing the Atlantic ... without captain Roy Finlay

Colin Mearns

CREW MEMBERS who jumped ship during a calamitous attempt to row the Atlantic are considering suing the skipper, whom they say branded them cowards and mutineers.

At a press conference in Glasgow yesterday, nine of the crew of the Atlantic Endeavour criticised the aggressive manner and poor seamanship of Roy Finlay, 36, and accused him of endangering their lives.

The 14 men and two women, who paid £5,000 each to take

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

part in the challenge, have demanded their money back.

"We want an apology of some form and financial compensation would be appreciated," said crew member Patrick Kendell.

"Roy Finlay said we didn't have the stomach for it and weren't physically fit enough. That is a total lie. The only person who we feel wasn't physi-

cally and mentally up to the trip was the captain."

The crew claims that during the voyage, life jackets remained unpacked during their 700 miles at sea, no man-overboard drill was practised and the captain ordered navigation lights to be turned off.

"We were in essence trusting our lives to Roy Finlay," said James Nye, 30, a policeman from Exeter. "We appreciate it was a risky trip but we didn't expect the captain to fall short."

The final straw came after the 10-ton boat docked at Sao Vicente, in the Cape Verde Islands, with generator trouble. According to the crew, Mr Finlay used their money to get drunk and pay for a prostitute.

"Our concern regarding the woman wasn't that he was with her," said Mr Nye, "but that we were meant to be doing a quick turn around and going back to sea. Roy Finlay was in bed with this female and no work was being done to repair the boat."

The rowers had trained for 12 months with the aim of beating the record of 35 days and eight hours for an Atlantic crossing set by a French team in 1992.

After taking 16 days from the Canaries and with another 2,000 miles to go to Barbados, a record was out of the question when they struggled into Cape Verde on 16 November. Too late, they realised the Endeavour was heavy and not really built for rowing. Mr

Finlay suggested putting up a sail but was reminded it was a rowing attempt.

The picture that emerged yesterday was of early misgivings about Mr Finlay being overwhelmed by the desire for an ego-boosting adventure. The crew is already talking of trying again next year, but with a different skipper.

Neither the crew nor Mr Finlay's father, Bob, contact man for the expedition, know of the skipper's whereabouts.

Murder conviction is sent to Appeal Court

THE CONVICTION of a man found guilty of murdering an 84-year-old woman is to be referred back to the Court of Appeal after a damning report on the police investigation.

The Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) is sending the case of Brian Parsons for reconsideration after a year-long inquiry by the Hampshire force into the actions of Devon and

BY LOUISE JURY

Cornwall officers. The commission concluded that evidence from John Essery, the senior officer in the case and now assistant chief constable of Devon and Cornwall, misled the jury at Parsons' trial. The work of the forensic scientist, Dr John Whiteside, was condemned as "manifestly unsatis-

factory" and liable to "impugn his integrity as a professional expert prosecution witness".

Brian Parsons was convicted 10 years ago of the murder in 1987 of Ivy Batten, 84, who was beaten to death at her home in Shute, Devon.

The Hampshire review found that 160 instances of information, some of which undermined the police case, were withheld

from Parsons' defence team. Stephen Nunn, his solicitor, said yesterday that the police had "gone to great lengths" to suppress the information.

Prosecution evidence included fibres, from gloves used in the attack, which were found in Parsons' car and a jacket. But the review found clues linking the gloves to a burglar who was questioned about the case.

Mr Nunn said that if it hadn't been for media involvement in the case, "we wouldn't have got this far". He thanked the press, particularly Westcountry Television and Channel 4's *Trial and Error*, for their help.

From his prison cell, Parsons said: "It is just magic ... I feel sorry for the rest of the Batten family, but I can assure them I did not kill anybody."

A Devon and Cornwall police spokesman said they had carried out three internal reviews into the case and reported to the Home Office. They had assisted Hampshire in every way.

Stephen Phelps, producer of *Trial and Error*, said: "The question has to be asked - how did the fibres come to be in Brian Parsons' car and the pocket of a jacket he used?"

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Gates joins the great US giveaway

By DAVID USBORNE
in New York
AND KIM SENGUPTA

BILL GATES might be feeling a little sour about the response in America to his announcement this week that he and his wife, Melinda, are to donate \$100m to help to speed the delivery of vaccines to children in developing countries. Mildly impressed, might best characterise it.

That there is a sense of cynicism about this latest bounty from the Gates software fortune may have to do with the trial under way in Washington DC. The mighty Microsoft is accused of breaking the rules to squeeze out rivals in the computer industry. What better time to display generosity than when the Microsoft brand is being battered from left and right?

All Americans understand that giving away money is not always the altruistic act it seems. For every charitable donation, the giver can expect giant tax benefits. Shell out \$1bn (£600m) and your deductions will be worth \$600m.

Above all, it is a matter of expectations. In a tradition that is established by the industrial barons of the turn of the century, such as the steel giant Andrew Carnegie, the very wealthy of America are under an unwritten obligation to give.

Until recently, indeed, Mr Gates was suffering criticism that he was not doing enough to ensure the spread of his booty. When Ted Turner, founder of CNN, created a foundation to benefit the United Nations worth \$1bn last year, he



Bill Gates, slow by US standards to give money to charity, hands over computers worth \$100m to children in Chicago Jonathan Kirn/Gama

challenged Mr Gates to speed up his charitable donations.

This is an era where giving in America is reaching unprecedented heights. As more and more Americans find they have more money than they know what to do with - thanks to a seven-year boom in the economy and a meteoric stock market - private charitable foundations are being created at a record pace. Last year, the value of charitable donations reached 2 per cent of US GDP,

which stands at \$8trillion. It helps that there are 200 billionaires in the US today.

Gates has promised eventually to give away 90 per cent of whatever fortune he accumulates. His philanthropy so far is directed through two foundations. The William H Gates Foundation, established in 1994, is directed at giving to multiple causes such as education and healthcare. Last year he also set up the Gates Library Foundation to provide computer

technology to libraries in poorer neighbourhoods.

The same culture of tycoons embracing philanthropy does not appear to exist in Britain, according to those involved in fund-raising for charities and the arts. There are, of course, exceptions. Vivien Duffield, daughter of the entrepreneur Charles Clore, has given away almost £90m to medical charities, the arts and education. And John Paul Getty, American born but a British citizen since

last year, was given a knighthood in recognition of the £120m he has handed out.

In October Peter Lampl, who made his money in the equity markets, announced prep schools would be given £40m by his charity, the Sutton Trust. We now also have the Rupert Murdoch chair of communications at Worcester, Oxford; Sir John Moores University in Liverpool; and the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery.

But Mark Thorne, of Wealth-

watch, which monitors donations by the rich in Britain, said: "The Americans get a great deal of kudos and prestige from the act of large donations. In Britain the wealthy are almost shy of such publicity."

Paul Brown, of the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, blames the difference in tax systems. "In America the tax system is positively geared towards encouraging donations. Here it is just too complicated."

TOP TEN DONORS

1. Ted Turner - \$1bn (£625m) (US). Founder of CNN, Turner is now vice-chairman of Time Warner, the world's biggest media conglomerate. Married to the actress Jane Fonda.
2. Kathryn Albertson - \$660m (£412.5m) (US). Late husband Joe founded Albertson's supermarket chain, the US equivalent of Sainsbury's.
3. George Soros - \$540m (£337.5m) (US). Highly successful international currency speculator, currently based in New York. His interests include the legalisation of cannabis for medical purposes.
4. Bill Gates - \$210m (£131m) (US). Owner of Microsoft, Gates is fighting the US government over his firm's alleged monopoly status.
5. Leonard Abramson - \$100m (£62.5m) (US). Founder of US Healthcare, the US hospital network, which he sold in 1996. He funds cancer research.
6. Michael and Jane Eisner \$89m (£55.6m) (US). He is chair and CEO of the Walt Disney Corporation, one of world's biggest entertainment companies. Particularly concerned with helping underprivileged children in southern California.
7. Mitchell Wolfson Jr - \$75m (£47m) (US). Fortune from father's entertainment company. Collects historical memorabilia and has early braile edition of Mein Kampf.
8. Phyllis Wattis - \$70m (£44m) (US). The 92-year-old great-granddaughter of Brigham Young, founder of the polygamist Mormon Church. She directs much of her charitable effort towards the support of museums.
9. Peter Lampl - \$64m (£40m) (UK). Sole Briton on the list, on strength of his charitable donations in past year.
10. Raymond Nasher - \$50m (£31m) (US). Dallas property developer, 75. Supports foundation dedicated to building a museum - to house his own art collection.

Doctor on two more charges

HAROLD SHIPMAN, a general practitioner who faces six murder charges, appeared in court again yesterday charged with killing two more female patients.

The 52-year-old GP from Hyde, Greater Manchester, appeared before magistrates in Ashton-under-Lyne charged with murdering Jean Lilley, 59, and Irene Turner, 67.

The bodies of the two women were exhumed last month for post-mortem examinations.

Mrs Lilley died at her home in Hyde on 25 April last year and Mrs Turner at her home on 11 July 1996.

Dr Shipman, of Tameside, who runs a one-man practice in Hyde, was remanded in custody until Monday.

The bodies of nine female patients have now been exhumed as part of an investigation by Greater Manchester Police.

IN BRIEF

Pesticide link to breast cancer

CHEMICALS FOUND in pesticides may increase the risk of breast cancer when women are exposed to high doses, says a report in *The Lancet*. A study from Denmark that analysed blood from more than 200 women with breast cancer found that a pesticide, dieldrin, was "associated with a significantly dose-related risk of breast cancer".

Suspect questioned over rapes

DETECTIVES HUNTING a serial rapist who has struck across at least four counties were questioning a 34-year-old man in Northampton yesterday. Advances in DNA profiling had allowed officers in Northamptonshire to link a series of rapes in the county to other attacks, in Warwickshire and the Thames Valley.

London traffic slows to a trot

TRAFFIC IN central London now moves as slowly as it did in the horse-drawn era of 100 years ago, according to official figures published yesterday. Traffic speeds in inner London - the area between two and five miles of Waterloo Bridge - have slowed by 1.5mph since 1995 in the morning and evening peaks, to 12mph and 11.4mph. In central London average speeds have fallen to 10mph.

Neighbours shun estate agents

ESTATE AGENTS are the least popular neighbours according to a survey published yesterday. Just 1 per cent of homeowners surveyed by NatWest Mortgage Services wanted an estate agent living next door. The most popular neighbour's occupation was a doctor.

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Anne Dillson - SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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Scott Brown - THE TIMES

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Departing hero leaves House with a happy hangover

THERE WAS a slightly morning-after feeling in the Commons yesterday - Conservative MPs in that mood of craggy irritability that often follows unwise indulgence and Labour MPs happy to remind them of how foolish they had looked when they had been discovered handcuffed to a House of Lords lampost with their trousers round their ankles.

In the Upper Chamber, Lord Strathclyde confessed that his party "had taken some hard blows" but it didn't look like it, frankly, with great waves of amiability wafting from both sides. Lord Cranborne himself, the instigator of Wednes-

day night's festivities, was sleeping it off somewhere, but his ears will have been glowing - Tory peers didn't quite sing "For he's a jolly good fellow" when tributes were paid to him, but there was no sense of resentful obligation in the ceremonies of farewell.

Margaret Jay confided in peers that she and the exiled hero had had "extremely personal relations", a choice of phrase that clearly made the blood pulse dangerously through some sclerotic arteries. Lord Strathclyde, as cheerfully urbane in his elevation as Lord Cranborne had been in his fall, expressed his hope that this appealing close-

ness might continue under his leadership. If they were feeling the effects of the previous night, in short, then it was one of those delicious champagne hangovers - all benevolence, with the bubbles of excitement still rising in the blood.

Naturally, Labour MPs shared some of that continuing buzz - happy, after their own humiliation on Tuesday, to have an opportunity for retaliation so soon. This time it was circumstance that had written their lines for them, rather than Millbank. Was Mr Mandelson expecting a question from the other House relating to unfair dismissal, asked one backbencher, archly?

THE SKETCH



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

John Battle concluded a testy reply from the front bench by saying that he wasn't really surprised at

the level of the questioning since the Conservatives "aren't even capable of joined-up opposition any more".

"I'm tempted to ask him whether he's cleared his questions with the leader," teased Mr Mandelson, as he dodged a precise interrogation from John Redwood about the euro. Tory members scowled as these prepared missiles dropped around them. They had been obliged to gulp down something far rougher and less forgiving the previous night, a bitter plonk distilled from Bulgarian tractor fuel and grape waste, and it had left them decidedly snappish.

On another day Mr Mandelson would have had a much harder

time, particularly given recent press reports suggesting that his fingerprints had been found all over a sizeable donation to the Millennium Dome. Since Mr Mandelson had promised a hands-off policy with regard to procuring sponsorship he was invited by Graham Brady to apologise for misleading the House. Naturally he declined, but murmurs of protest from Tory backbenchers had no real force to them. They didn't want a lot of noise, they just wanted to lie down somewhere in a darkened room.

They couldn't even find it in themselves to enjoy Dennis Skinner, who almost always acts as a kind of

Parliamentary Alka Seltzer. He rose during Millennium Dome questions to propose that its contents should include a fund-raising prehistoric section. For a small fee, he suggested, children could have their pictures taken with ermine-clad hereditary peers, and maybe Baby Dome - a respectful reference to the Tory leader - would act as a celebrity tour guide. Mr Mandelson grinned and said he would look into the possibility of a Cranborne Memorial as part of the Millennium. No wonder he looked happy, if even Mr Skinner thinks this is a laughing matter, the Government can afford to open another bottle right away.

Cook rules out tax unity for Europe

THE GOVERNMENT is to fight plans to end the national veto over tax harmonisation by seeking the co-operation of other sceptical member states, Robin Cook said yesterday.

The Foreign Secretary stressed that there was no majority among countries to scrap the present system of unanimity required to introduce greater tax harmonisation.

"It is not just Britain but many member states who will oppose tax harmonisation," he said, opening a debate on the European Union, ahead of the forthcoming European Summit in Vienna.

Earlier the Prime Minister's official spokesman said that Austria, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Ireland and Greece were also opposed to ending the national veto on a common tax policy.

The Government is appointing an extra 33 officials to the European Union to improve co-operation between Britain and member states.

During his speech, Robin Cook said that tax harmonisation was "quite simply not going to happen".

Dismissing the "myths and mischiefs" that had been "peddled as facts", he said: "There is no majority for the harmonisation of tax rates in Europe."

TAXATION

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
POLITICAL REPORTER

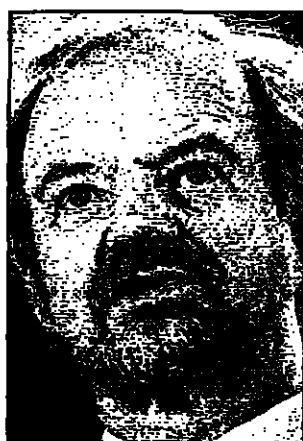
never mind the unanimity which would be required for any action. Nor is the need for unanimity going to change. It would require all members of the European Union to agree on a change to qualified majority voting on tax. Most member states will not agree."

He said, however, that Britain would "vigorously support" measures to tackle unfair tax breaks that distorted free trade or provided an illegitimate industrial subsidy.

Pointing to the need for a level playing field on excise duties, he added: "And where there is a British interest in co-operation on tax, we will support it... and where there are limited proposals for co-ordination on tax rules which are of benefit to Britain we should support them."

But like "most other member states", the Government would resist any moves to harmonise direct taxation, corporation tax and proposals for a European withholding tax on interest on savings.

"The member states of the European Union are going to continue to have tax systems which remain distinctive, even



Robin Cook: 'No majority for harmonisation of tax'

sometimes eccentric... Germany has a special tax on coffee. I can't myself see the French swallowing a tax on coffee," he said.

But Michael Howard, the shadow Foreign Secretary, said that Britain was facing pressure, as Oskar Lafontaine, the German Finance Minister, had asserted, to move towards a single European state.

"This is a great march towards a single European state and the British Government will have to respond. This is not something the Government can fudge."

Mr Howard said that the

European Commission was preparing to publish suggestions for a common VAT regime, which put Britain's zero rates at risk and could lead to the introduction of VAT on food.

Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, delivered a fresh blow to Britain in the dispute over tax harmonisation by backing the stance of Mr Lafontaine.

Mr Schröder's intervention contradicts British claims that Mr Lafontaine had gone out on a limb on Tuesday by suggesting an end to the national veto in taxation policy. In an interview in the *Financial Times*, Mr Schröder said: "We will never have a complete harmonisation because of differences in countries' tax bases. But I stress that the Finance Minister has the backing of the government when he demands steps in this direction."

Mr Lafontaine's view on majority voting was, he said, "not only the personal view of the Finance Minister. It is also the position of the government."

He added: "We know that there are different opinions in Europe but that doesn't mean that it is not sensible in a single market with a single currency to have better tax co-ordination."



The German President, Roman Herzog (centre) admires the ceiling of the Palace of Westminster yesterday with curator of art, Malcolm Hay (right) John Stillwell

Ten MPs win a shot at statute book

BACKBENCHER BILLS

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
POLITICAL REPORTER

TEN BACKBENCHERS won an opportunity to introduce legislation on an area of their choice yesterday, when the result of the ballot for Private Members' Bills was announced.

They have until next month to choose a subject. Eric Clarke, MP for Midlothian, has pledged to make it easier for miners and their families to claim compensation for such diseases as bronchitis and emphysema. Gordon Prentice, MP for Pendle, and Mark Oaten, MP for Winchester, are considering legislation on the right to roam and the gazumping of houses respectively.

The Portman Group, which campaigns on behalf of the drinks industry for a sensible approach to alcohol, said it was looking for one of the MPs to take on a Bill to crack down on alcohol sales to under-18s.

Last year Mike Foster, the Worcester MP, tried to bring in a Bill banning fox hunting. It received cross-party support but ran out of parliamentary time.



Mike Foster's Bill ran out of time this year

Backbencher Bills often risk such a fate unless MPs can secure government support.

The MPs who came top in the ballot are: Debra Shipley (Lab, Stourbridge), Maria Eagle (Lab, Liverpool Garston), Eric Clarke (Lab, Midlothian), Andrew Robathan (Con, Blaby), Gordon Prentice (Lab, Pendle), Simon Burns (Con, Chelmsford West), Mark Oaten (Lib Dem, Winchester), Chris McCafferty (Lab, Calder Valley), Patrick McLoughlin (Con, Derbyshire West) and Christopher Fraser (Con, Dorset Mid and Poole North).

An independent Scotland would have to more than double the basic rate of income tax to keep pace with current public spending, according to a study released today.

The report, by a firm of London accountants, claims an independent Scotland, taking into account North Sea oil revenues, would have a fiscal deficit of £3.9bn. To plug the hole through income tax would mean a rise in the basic rate from 23p to 49p, the report said.

Food and railways head new agenda

LEGISLATION TO create a Strategic Rail Authority and a Food Standards Agency is now likely to be introduced this parliamentary session, following the agreement on the handling of House of Lords reform, ministers said yesterday.

Both manifesto commitments were put on hold because of lack of parliamentary time. And, although the Government committed itself to introducing draft Bills during this session, both were regarded as "missing measures" of the Queen's Speech.

But John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, said that both proposals would be introduced as a priority, if legislative time was freed, up as a result of the deal to keep 91 hereditary peers in the Lords, during the interim period between stage one and stage two of the reform.

Mr Prescott said a Strategic Rail Authority would ensure that passengers and freight operators would benefit from the reforms the railways so badly needed.

"It will make sure that the system is run as a network and not just as a collection of dif-

LEGISLATION

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
POLITICAL REPORTER



Pledge: John Prescott

ferent businesses. It will mean an integrated network with the interest of the passengers and freight industry properly safeguarded," he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister was taunted by William Hague at the time of the Queen's Speech when it became apparent that none of his proposals would become law in the next session. But Mr Prescott responded by saying that he had more Bills than any other minister and that many of his transport policies could be achieved without legislation.

In the Commons, the senior Labour backbencher Gwyneth Dunwoody, chairman of the influential Transport Select Committee, said the creation of the Strategic Rail Authority would be widely welcomed by "every-one's constituents" and would produce "some very positive results for the whole of Britain".

Margaret Beckett, the Leader of the Commons, said during questions on forthcoming parliamentary business "it may well be possible" that the Government would now be able to introduce the authority. "I know that will give you and many MPs considerable pleasure," she added.

Retailers and consumers are set to welcome the pledge to introduce the Food Standards Agency which was omitted from the Queen's Speech after a dispute between the Treasury and the Ministry of Agriculture over funding.

The Treasury was said to be pressing for the £100 million annual running costs of the agency to be met by a £100 levy on shops and restaurants, but the ministry has argued for it to be paid out of general taxation. At the time, the Consumers' Association said it was "bitterly disappointed".

Football break

A THREE-WEEK Christmas break was announced for MPs by Commons Leader, Margaret Beckett. The House will rise on 17 December and return on 11 January. The Lords rises the same day as the Commons but returns on 7 January. Government Chief Whip, Lord Carter, making the announcement in the Lords, told peers: "Rumours that the House will sit on Boxing Day are completely untrue, not least because Southampton are playing Chelsea that day and I intend to be there."

THE HOUSE



More for Dome

AN EXTRA £15m in sponsorship is expected to be allocated to the Millennium Dome and a further £25m is subject to negotiation. The cash is in addition to the £120m sponsorship already received.

£167m for trams

A SCHEME to bring trams to Nottingham, the Nottingham Express Transit, is to be given £167m of government funding. Transport minister John Reid announced yesterday.

Eye on imports

THE GOVERNMENT will keep a close eye on the "dumping" of cheap Third World imports on steel and bicycle manufacturers in Britain, the Small Firms minister Barbara Roche, promised during question time.

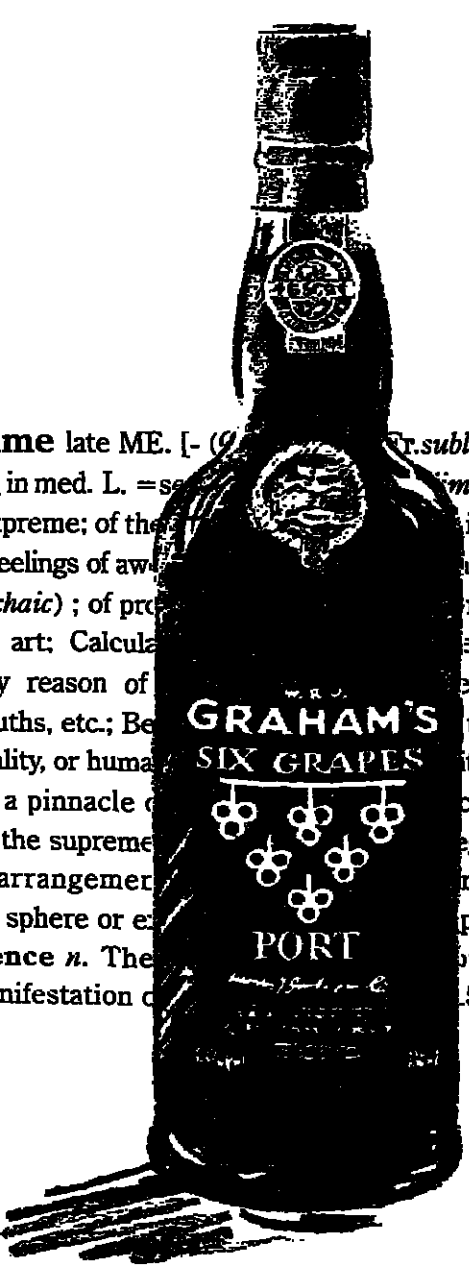
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Boost for buyers

A LONG-AWAITED shake-up of house-buying procedures in England and Wales, which is expected to curb "gazumping" by shortening the process, is to be unveiled on Monday, the Housing minister, Hilary Armstrong, said.

Neither House will be sitting today

W. & J.
GRAHAM'S
ESTABLISHED 1820



Sublime late ME. [- (O) r. sublimar or L. sublimare lift up, elevate (in med. L. = sublimis); 1. adj. exalted, lofty; majestic; supreme; of the highest or noblest nature; awakening feelings of awe; generation; raised up, lifted on high (archaic); of profound (literary); Of things in nature and art; Calculated to excite deep reverence, or lofty emotion, by reason of beauty, or grandeur 1700; Of ideas, truths, etc.; Be the highest regions of thought, reality, or human achievement, surpassing excellence, the supreme degree, the lofty or grand, in thought, arrangement, or style; 3. n. To raise to an elevated sphere or exalted position; (spiritually) sublime 1609. Quintessence n. The purest or most perfect form or manifestation of a substance 1570. Quintessential a.

The Quintessential Port.

London promised 'world-class leader'

By PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

THE DEPUTY Prime Minister, John Prescott, promised "world-class government for a world-class city" yesterday when he published the Government's Bill to create a mayor and assembly for London.

The Greater London Authority Bill will establish Britain's first directly elected mayor, with wide-ranging powers over transport, planning, police and the environment.

Mr Prescott said London's "first citizen", backed and monitored by a 25-member assembly, will oversee a budget of £3.3bn and have the power to appoint his or her own cabinet.

The mayor will also be able to raise millions of pounds from road pricing and employee car-parking charges, the proceeds of which will have to be ploughed back into improving public transport.

Previous estimates have suggested that £400m a year could be raised by charging motorists 28 pence to enter inner London, monitored by a hi-tech system of cameras.

Elections for the Greater London Authority, the first self-government for London since the demise of the GLC 12 years ago, will be held by the spring of 2000 at the latest.

"This Bill will give power to the people to decide London's future. The Bill will restore London-wide democracy to create a strong mayor with real power to deal with the city's concerns," Mr Prescott said.

To ensure the mayor stays in touch with the electorate, a "People's Question Time" will be held twice a year, with an annual "State of London" debate, he revealed.

A number of key issues were left out of the Bill, however, including the salary for the top post - described only as "substantial" - and exactly when the new authority will take over the control of the London Underground.

Mr Prescott confirmed yesterday that the Tube would not be transferred to the GLA until public-private partnership contracts were finally agreed.

The new authority, which is to be housed in purpose-built offices either in Bloomsbury or by Tower Bridge, will cost £20m to set up and £20m a year to run.

The running costs will be met by a combination of government grants and a 3p-per-week precept on Londoners' council taxes. The precept could be used to raise extra funds, though ministers have

SO HOW DO THE CONTENDERS SHAPE UP?



KEN LIVINGSTONE
Former GLC leader, now Labour MP for Brent East, has transformed himself from "Red Ken" to "People's Ken". Pros: Has real experience of running London government. Cons: One voter, based in a family home in Downing Street, determined to see he doesn't get the Labour candidacy. Gimmicks: Wants conductors on buses, guards on Tubes, news in every garden. Electability rating: ★★★★★ (if he is allowed to stand)



JEFFREY ARCHER
Tory peer and millionaire novelist, former deputy chairman of the Conservatives who has set a breakneck pace in the race for the mayoralty. Pros: Done more hand-shaking, speech-giving and genuine hard work than anyone; loved by Tory blue-ribbon brigade. Cons: Evening Standard decries him. Gimmicks: Own mayoral Internet page; wants to put London on different time zone from Scotland; great mayoral flat. Electability rating: ★★



TONY BANKS
Former chairman of the GLC during Livingstone's reign, now Sports minister and East End MP. Pros: A genuine Londoner, has brash charisma needed for mayor; likely to pick up Ken's support among Labour members. Cons: Gaffe-prone, but less so recently. Gimmicks: Wise-cracking cheeky happy manner; support for Chelsea FC likely to pit 9/10ths of London against him. Electability rating: ★★★★★



GLENDIA JACKSON
Former double-Oscar winning actress, elected Labour MP for Hampstead and Highgate in 1992 and now Transport minister for London. Pros: High name-recognition among voters; current job means she has hands-on experience of most important task facing any incoming mayor. Cons: Often perceived as too earnest. Gimmicks: Only candidate to boast nude film appearances. Electability rating: ★★★★★



STEVEN NORRIS
Former London Transport minister and Tory MP, now heads Road Haulage Association, the truckers' lobby group. Pros: Like Ms Jackson, has real experience overseeing the Tube, buses and trains in the capital; businessman who ran successful car sales company. Cons: Some voters may remember there-ports about his five mistresses. Gimmicks: Easy manner of the second-hand car salesman. Electability rating: ★★



TREVOR PHILLIPS
Broadcaster most famous for job as presenter of LWT's London Programme. Pros: Well-liked, affable journalist; telegenic; reflects London's ethnic make-up; friend of Peter Mandelson. Cons: Low voter recognition; friend of Peter Mandelson. Gimmicks: Ran a "Yes for London" campaign in referendum in May; wholesome young dad. Electability rating: ★★



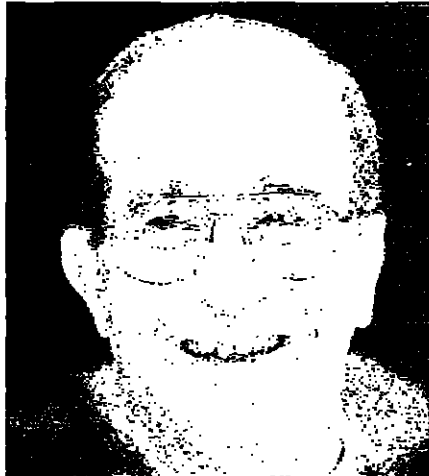
SIMON HUGHES
Liberal Democrat MP for Southwark North and Bermondsey; his party's spokesman on London. Pros: Well-known among Londoners; not a Tory. Cons: He may also want to lead the Liberal Democrats when Paddy Ashdown stands down; is seen by some as too cocky. Gimmicks: "Mr Clean" image. Electability rating: ★★



JUDITH MAYHEW
As chairman (sic) of City of London's influential Policy and Resources Committee, one of the most powerful women in the Square Mile. Pros: Extremely able businesswoman and lawyer; could offer Tories a credible female candidate. Cons: Described by some as "the best mayor London will never have". Gimmicks: New Zealander. Electability rating: ★



ROBERT AYLING
Chief executive, British Airways plc, currently member of several government taskforces. Pros: Well-liked by Tony Blair; real business experience at head of a multi-national company. Cons: BA's "dirty tricks" campaign against Virgin and its strike-busting tactics disliked by Labour members. Gimmicks: millionaire glamour. Electability rating: ★★



LORD LEVENE
Current Lord Mayor of the City of London. Pros: Only candidate who can actually claim that he has mayoral experience; seriously touted by some senior Tory figures. Cons: A former friend of Margaret Thatcher. Gimmicks: Looks nice in fancy mayoral coats and hats. Electability rating: ★

pledged to block any large "tax-and-spend" rises.

The Metropolitan Police will be run by a police authority with a majority of elected members, ending 167 years of direct control by the Home Secretary.

Richard Ottaway, shadow minister for London, attacked the delays over the part-

privatisation of the Tube and said that the proposed congestion charge was a "tax by the back door" that would not

solve the city's traffic problems.

"Clearly the Government's plans for London Underground are in total disarray as they don't think they will have a deal in place by May 2000. What

have they been doing all this time?" Mr Ottaway said.

Simon Hughes, the Liberal Democrats' London spokesman, said the Bill gave too much power to the mayor and too few rights to the assembly,

but said that his party would support it overall.

"The GLA Bill is a welcome beginning to the return of London government," he said. "Imperfect London democracy is better than no London democracy."

With more than 270 clauses,

the Bill will be the biggest piece of legislation this Parliament. Before the recent "civil war" within the Tory party, ministers were worried that the Lords could delay its pas-

sage. Despite the disarray within the Conservative camp, the Government wants to give the Bill an early start.

It will receive its second reading in the House of Commons before Christmas.

Man 'lied' about police assault

A MAN who claims he was kicked, punched and racially abused by Metropolitan Police officers as a 12-year-old schoolboy was accused yesterday of "indulging in an orgy of lies and distortions" to earn himself "a fast buck".

Counsel for the police alleged in the High Court that Jermaine Jauvel, now 23, was "an antisocial man, a manipulative man, a scheming man, a dishonest man". Mr Jauvel, a musician who lives in Walworth, south London, is suing the Metropolitan Police Commissioner,

By KATHY MARKS

Sir Paul Condon, for damages arising from his arrest and prosecution for assaulting a police officer in March 1987.

He told Mr Justice Popplewell on Wednesday that he was kicked in the face and dropped on the ground by officers during an altercation with a group of schoolchildren at the Riverdale shopping centre in Lewisham, south London.

But yesterday John Beggs, counsel for the police, alleged he had launched the proceed-

ings "in the interests of one thing only: your bank balance".

"Did someone suggest to you that suing the Met was a good idea?" he asked.

"You have made a series of outrageous allegations against decent police officers."

"You are deliberately playing the race card - you thought that the more serious the allegations, the more likely it would be that the Metropolitan Police, stung by the Lawrence inquiry, would pay up."

Mr Jauvel denied that he had gone to the shopping centre

that afternoon because of rumours that girls from rival local schools were planning a fight.

He also denied that a red bag, in which police found a six-inch bladed knife, belonged to him, although he acknowledged that he had been carrying a "strikingly similar" bag.

Asked about the allegation that he was punched in the face, Mr Jauvel said he could not remember where the blow landed. "You were not punched at all; you are making it up as you go along," said Mr Beggs.

The case continues today.

Britain 14th in health league

THE UNITED Kingdom ranks a sickly 14th in Europe's new table of the healthiest countries, beaten not only by the Nordic countries but by the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Greece and Slovenia.

High rates of death from cancer and respiratory disease, as well as above-average numbers of Aids cases, mean Britain is ranked nearly halfway down the table.

Sweden and Norway emerge as the healthiest nations in Europe, while Russia, Latvia and Ukraine are at the bottom

By GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

of the list compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

The unit looked at 14 key health indicators in compiling its report, *Health Care Europe*, including death rate, life expectancy, childhood mortality, immunisation coverage, number of Aids cases, death rates from cancer, heart and respiratory diseases and smoking.

One of the reasons for the UK's low ranking is unhealthy eating, said the editor of the re-

port, Alexandra Wyke. "We tend to eat a lot more processed food than other countries. But the second reason is the huge and growing disparity between the health of the rich and the poor, despite a national health service. It cannot be explained exclusively by people turning to private healthcare, as that is still a very small percentage."

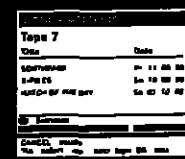
The UK fares well in indicators such as life expectancy, where it is ranked 8th, but it is 21st when it comes to cancer death rates and only 15th for its immunisation coverage.

The Nordic countries do well because their small populations makes healthcare easier to manage. Mediterranean countries are high on the list because of their healthy diets.

But more surprisingly, countries such as the Czech Republic and Slovakia also do better than the UK because of good immunisation programmes and lower rates of cancer.

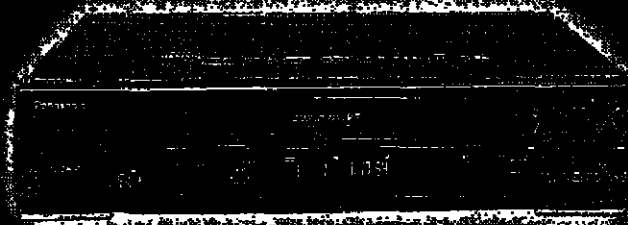
Germany, despite being the biggest spender on healthcare in Europe, comes 16th in the table, mainly because of problems since reunification.

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Hillsborough police lose damages case

FOUR POLICE officers who suffered severe mental trauma treating dying fans on the pitch at the 1989 Hillsborough football disaster are not entitled to compensation, the House of Lords ruled yesterday.

In a majority 3-2 decision, the law lords overturned a Court of Appeal judgment in 1996 that the officers should receive damages after being exposed, by the admitted negligence of South Yorkshire Police, to "excessively horrific events such as were likely to cause psychiatric illness even in a police officer".

A victory yesterday for the four officers could have helped potential claims by 17 more police officers and members of other emergency services involved in the disaster, which killed 96 fans.

But one of the law lords, Lord Hoffman, said: "The ordinary man would think it wrong that policemen, even as part of a general class of persons who rendered assistance, should have the right to compensation for psychiatric injury out of public funds while the bereaved relatives are sent away with nothing."

Rose Robinson, of the Hillsborough Family Support Group,

By IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

had little sympathy for the officers. "As a mother of one of the victims, I wasn't entitled to compensation. I was not deemed to have suffered enough by watching the tragedy unfold on television and knowing my son was there," she said. "If police officers are not prepared to face trauma then they shouldn't be in the job. People are going to lose faith in them if compensation claims like this continue. They will be seen as wimps."

The damages claims of the four officers were originally dismissed by a High Court judge, who held that the officers had not been placed beyond the normal call of duty and were not close enough to the actual scene of the tragedy—unlike 14 others who carried out immediate rescue work inside the spectator pens at the Leppings Lane end of the stadium where many fans were crushed.

Those 14 received a total of £1.2m in agreed damages from insurers for the police, Sheffield Wednesday FC and the club's engineers. But Inspector Henry White and Constables

Edward Baird, Anthony Bevis and Geoffrey Glave—who treated fans on the pitch—argued that they should be dealt with as "rescuers" who were entitled to damages like other members of the public.

Lord Steyn said police officers who were traumatised by something they encountered in their work had the benefit of statutory schemes, which permitted them to retire on a pension. In that sense, they were already better off than the relatives of those who died.

In 1992, the House of Lords dismissed the claims of relatives who sued for psychiatric injury, including that of a man who witnessed the scenes at the football ground where two of his brothers died.

Simon Allen, the solicitor for the four officers, said the "right of professional rescuers to sue for psychiatric injury has been established by the House of Lords".

Mike Hedges, Chief Constable of South Yorkshire, said the ruling was not a cause for celebration. "Police officers join the service with their eyes open to the dangers they face and the standards of fortitude and courage expected of them."



'Conversation Piece', by the Spanish artist Juan Munoz, on the seafront at South Shields; the 22-figure bronze work, installed this week, is South Tyneside's first landmark sculpture paid for by the Arts Council Lottery Fund NNP

Channel 4 wins Monica exclusive

By JACKIE BURDON

CHANNEL 4 has clinched the only international interview with Monica Lewinsky, it confirmed yesterday.

The £400,000 deal was signed for the original asking price after "editorial" negotiations. Channel 4 said that the interviewer, Jon Snow, will be "both tough and fair" with Miss Lewinsky, who has agreed to speak about "her life and the events of the last year, including her relationship with Bill Clinton".

The deal means that the channel can cash in on worldwide rights for the exclusive, as the planned American network television interview is restricted to screenings in the United States and Canada. "This is a real coup for Channel 4," David Lloyd, head of news, current affairs and business, said.

Other British broadcasters have reportedly been trying to secure an interview, but the negotiations were not over money. Channel 4 said: "The problems have been about what she can and cannot say. We have been talking to her lawyers and are now happy we are going to have an interview with some editorial value."

The interview will be conducted in the US and will be transmitted, probably in February, within hours of her American interview, which is believed to be with Barbara Walters.

Jail baby units reviewed

By IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

THE PRISON Service announced a review of its mother and baby units yesterday as the news emerged that more women were planning to sue the service for being separated from their children.

The review comes only days after a mother in Holloway prison, north London, took the service to court after her newborn child was taken from her when she was denied a place in the jail's mother and baby unit.

Richard Tilt, director-general of the Prison Service, said the review would look at the very principles of holding mothers and babies in prison.

The review comes as the

type of facilities on offer to mothers and babies, as well as the process of allocating places inside units. It will consider how long babies should be able to stay with their mothers.

The policy governing mother and baby units has not been reviewed since the first one opened in 1966. There are four prisons offering a total of 64 places in the units.

Mr Tilt said: "I believe it is now time to conduct such a review to look again at the principles of holding mothers and babies in prison, operation of the units and specifically the admission criteria and procedures."

MARK STEEL

'Ask the parent of a two-year-old who is the most terrifying dinosaur of all and they will probably answer "Barney".'

IN THE FRIDAY REVIEW

PAGE 8

From the bestselling author of *Gridiron* and *Esau* comes the thriller of the future and the thriller for Christmas

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Re

SURPRISE PRO stock market goals - are beco Yesterday it wa turn to kick the The Anglo-1 Christmas pres Arcadia, the fa tacularly wrong tile. Reed blar ion and tough A downturn, but fuming by the e shortfall. They chats with the months and h pression things The scale o larger than we despairing anal slash 1998 forec cent to £770m. Reed's sha purished as b surprise into spurned anal: stock 10.5p do the owner of i shop chain, c pinch of Wedn lost 21p to 15 Stanley downg

Investm

Bas rise bac

BASS PROVIDE brewing and let some welcome when it reported profits at its ne Hotels division. said there had be put puts and b rowing a poor su Including £17.5m pre-tax pr increased from 1997 said that he US was softening in the U Europe. Like-for-like and beer busin year-on-year de trading, but the managed p O'Neill's and Al encouraging, the c It has been a porate activity which it acquiri £1.81 for £1.81 sold businesses cluding Gala bin

Gra

VIDEOLOGIC, the signer, is confid able to license it to several perso ufacturers early The compan about 15 PC ma s PowerVR2 S can deliver tw three-dimension ing it especially computer game No agreem signed yet, bu Videologic to cl early next year group that man for Videologic, ume production of next year.

Country	Sterling Spot
Australia	1.0000
Austria	2.6669
Canada	2.0100
Denmark	57.562
France	10.575
Germany	1.4155
Italy	2.4584
Japan	9.501
Netherlands	2.7829
New Zealand	458.43
Sweden	12.517
Switzerland	1.7175
Taiwan	275.5
Thailand	28.13
UK	6.3138
USA	1.6575
West Germany	3.1357
Yugoslavia	1.795
Zimbabwe	5.46

Country	Spot
Argentina	1.84
Brazil	2.01
China	13.7
India	50.4
Indonesia	389
Malaysia	364
Philippines	70.7
Singapore	1275
Taiwan	0.56
Thailand	141

Helpline opens to aid the homeless

THOUSANDS OF people around Britain are facing homelessness because they are given bad advice or no help at all, according to a new report by the housing charity Shelter.

Children are particularly vulnerable, but owner-occupiers, victims of domestic violence and the elderly often face critical housing problems. To tackle the issue, the charity has set up a free, 24-hour, telephone helpline with BT.

Shelter examined 700 cases involving more than 1,200 people. It found that in more than 60 per cent of cases, people suffered because they did not receive information at the right time. More than a quarter had received poor service or inaccurate advice, which aggravated the problems. In one case in seven, local authorities had made the wrong decision.

Almost 80 per cent of those surveyed were either homeless or were facing homelessness. Others were suffering harassment or benefits delays, or had problems with repairs or arrears in rent or mortgage.

On any one night in Britain, up to 2,500 people sleep on the streets, 600 people face losing their homes and 80,000 are in bed-and-breakfast rooms.

More than 300,000 people live in homes where they are three months or more behind in their mortgage payments, more than one million people live in homes unfit for human habitation and nearly three million children live in households that cannot afford their housing costs without help from the state.

Of the 700 case histories, nearly 10 per cent were owner-occupiers, of which three-quarters had had their home repossessed or were facing repossession. A quarter rented in the private sector and a fifth were local authority tenants.

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

Under the 1996 Housing Act, if people apply for rehousing they must show they do not have accommodation elsewhere which is reasonable for them to occupy.

Even then they may be judged to have made themselves intentionally homeless and lose their right to housing. People may also be told it is reasonable for them to stay in their current accommodation.

In West Sussex, a couple with four children witnessed a murder in their home town. They gave evidence to police and were scared of reprisals. They applied as homeless to another local authority and were told to return home. In another case a local authority refused emergency housing to a 16-year-old rape victim who had been thrown out by her parents.

"Some of the cases we see are beyond belief," said Shelter's deputy director, Louise Casey. "It is unbelievable that a woman who has been beaten for years and who finally summons up the courage to flee with her children is told by a local authority she has made herself intentionally homeless."

Shelter worked with 100,000 people last year but with the new helpline it expects to assist 300,000 next year. The helpline covers England, Scotland and Wales and is for people with any type of housing problem.

The helpline is on 0800 800-4444

Pioneering surgery restores man's sight



John Barr, from Yorkshire, has his eyes tested after the operation in Liverpool restored his sight Peter Byrne

A 70-YEAR-OLD man spoke yesterday of how his life had "changed completely" after a pioneering operation restored his sight when he faced the prospect of blindness.

John Barr, a retired dentist, had already lost all sight in his right eye and his left eye was failing so rapidly he could recognise people only when they were close up. After the operation on his left eye, he is riding a bicycle again and reading small print in newspapers.

Charities for the blind welcomed the news of the new operation but said they wanted to see full trials on the procedure to ascertain how successful it could be.

Surgeons at Royal Liverpool Hospital's St Paul's Eye Unit operated on Mr Barr, who lost the sight of his right eye seven years ago through macular degeneration. Macular degeneration is the most common cause of blindness in the Western world, affecting a million people in Britain, primarily the old. It is a condition in which the retina wears out over time, leaving sufferers with only peripheral vision.

Until now, the only treatment has been laser therapy

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

but this cannot be used on most patients. "I'd had laser treatment but that had not worked and things were pretty bleak," Mr Barr said yesterday. "I jumped at the chance to be one of the first patients to try this operation."

The surgeons at the unit worked to transfer Mr Barr's vision from a worn part of the retina to a healthier area, thereby restoring his sight. "Put simply, it is like moving around a carpet which has a worn patch in it and tucking the worn part away," said David Wong, chief ophthalmic surgeon. "I believe that this is the single most important surgical development for many years."

Mr Barr can now read a number plate at 25 yards. "In time, my vision may improve enough for me to drive again."

A spokesman for the Royal National Institute for the Blind said the news was "very exciting" but more work needed to be done. "We need to know how much vision it restores, whether it works in all cases or only for certain people. There are a lot of questions."

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Happy Christmas from Sainsbury's

THE RIGHTS OF EVERY MAN

'The Independent' is publishing daily each of the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, illustrated by Ralph Steadman, to mark its 50th anniversary on 10 December.



Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

A pamphlet edition of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is published by Waterstone's, price £1. Proceeds to the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture.

informative:

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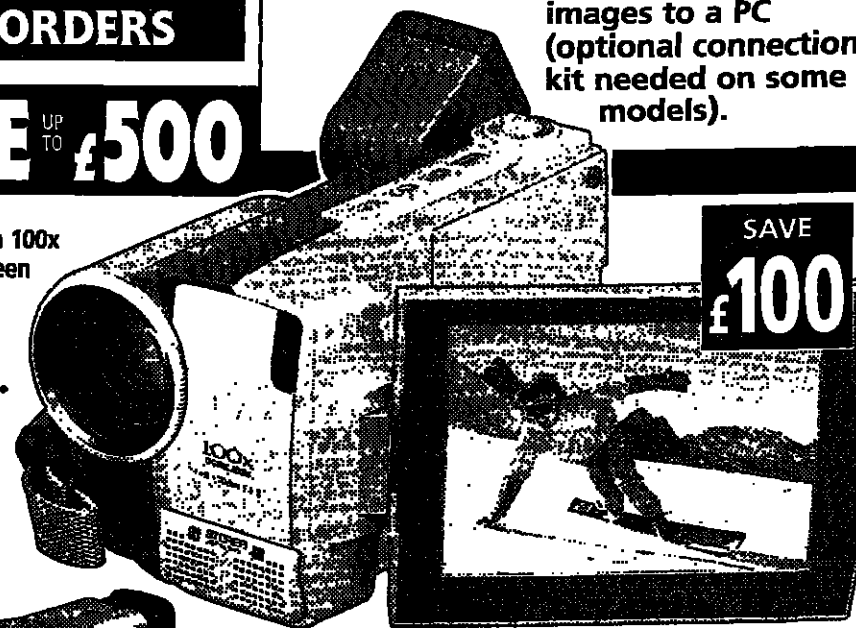
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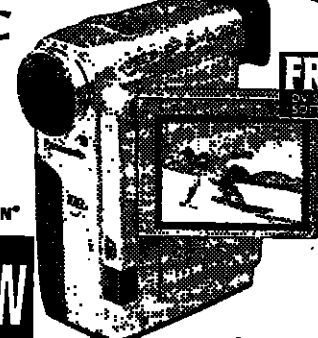
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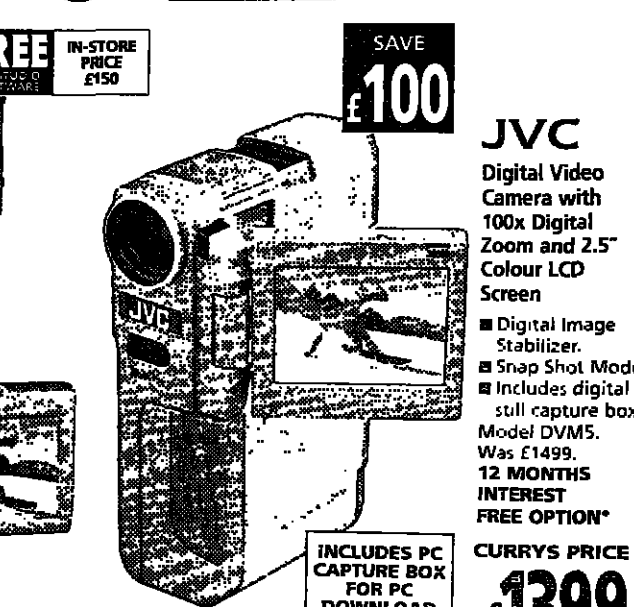
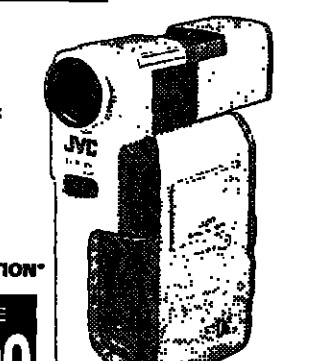
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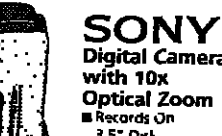
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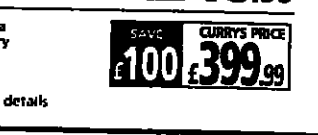
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صكرا من الراجل

Anglo-French 'battering ram' forged

NOT YET an "entente cordiale", it is more like an *entente cordiale*. British and French leaders started their annual two-day summit on the Breton coast yesterday amid talk of an "historic" joint initiative on European defence policy.

Like the coastal mist, suspicion and uncertainty lingered on both sides, but some sort of statement of principles is likely to be issued today by Tony Blair, President Jacques Chirac and the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin.

However vague the final language - and vague it is likely to be - the occasion can reasonably claim to be historic.

French officials say the preparatory talks have been the most substantial and innovative on a large European issue between London and Paris since the dawn of France's Fifth Republic in 1958: in other words since President Charles de Gaulle's "non" to British membership of what was then the Common Market.

This is the 21st annual Anglo-French summit, but the first in which the two govern-

BY JOHN LICHFIELD
in St Malo

ments have sought - notwithstanding the anti-European thunder in the British press - to act as a battering ram for the creation of a new EU policy.

There has been much talk of Franco-German axes and Anglo-Franco-German triangles but this is the first time that London and Paris have conspired, in the Franco-German manner, to push EU powers into a significant new area.

Mr Blair was meeting President Chirac tête-à-tête last night, followed by dinner with Mr Jospin. All three will come together for a joint press conference this morning.

There is other business on the table: the reform of the EU budget and farm policy; German ideas for the harmonisation of VAT and corporation taxes; the enlargement of the EU to the east and Western policy in Iraq and Kosovo. There will also be meetings between the British and French Foreign, Defence, Finance, Transport and European ministers.

But the centrepiece - fittingly in a town that has been at the heart of Anglo-French enmity and alliance for centuries - is defence policy.

Should the EU have one? If so, what should its scope and powers be; and how can it be called into being without weakening Nato and encouraging future American administrations to dilute US commitment to the defence of Europe?

St Malo was for centuries one of the principal ports from which French corsairs raided British shipping; it was blockaded for years by the British fleet during the Napoleonic wars and it was flattened by American and British bombers, in the cause of French liberation, in August 1944.

The new defence relationship between London and Paris was symbolised yesterday by the presence in the inner harbour of the destroyer HMS *Birmingham*, moored alongside the French warship, *Tourville*. The Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson and his French colleague, Alain Richard, are due



Jacques Chirac, the French President, and Tony Blair at the start of the two-day summit in St Malo

David Ademas/Reuters

to sign a letter of intent on military co-operation aboard the Royal Navy vessel today.

But how can such partnerships be handled at the highest level? The two countries are by far the greatest military powers on the Continent, east of Russia. Each has become frus-

trated - Britain from within Nato, France from outside - with their inability to make that strength count in local but poisonous conflicts in which the US refuses to get involved.

The central aim of the summit is to produce a statement of principles that would square

both British and French anxieties and, it is hoped, appeal to other European countries and the US at the Nato summit next spring.

Britain has agreed for the first time that defence policy can be decided at EU level. The principal difficulty is what to do

with the Western European Union, the existing, ineffectual, European defence arm, suspended somewhere between Nato and the EU.

Britain would like the WEU's forces to be given to Nato and its decision-making capacity to go to the EU. The French

want the WEU to be swallowed up by the EU wholesale and its logistics, satellite and transport capacity increased.

Officials were working last night on compromise wordings between these positions, which Mr Blair, Mr Chirac and Mr Jospin could sign today.

MEPs trim their travel perks

EURO-MPs voted to cut their lavish travel expenses yesterday and adopt a common salary under a new package designed to clean up the parliament's free-loading image.

The deal would give British MEPs a small pay rise, taking their earnings above those of MPs at Westminster, and would also give them a big tax break worth thousands of pounds.

If agreed by heads of government, the package will be phased in over five years.

The vote was welcomed by Alan Donnelly, leader of the 60 Labour MEPs, who said it was important to tackle the issue of

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

parliamentarians' expenses because public confidence was "seeping away" from the institution.

The package included giving MEPs the right to be taxed at the same preferential rate as EU officials - 22.3 per cent.

The issue will be discussed by EU heads of government at a summit in Vienna next week-end, although it was unclear whether Tony Blair will back the package, in view of the new tax concession. The deal needs the approval of all 15 leaders,

making the prospect of it proceeding far from certain.

The agreement bases travel allowances on costs incurred, with MEPs required to submit receipts. That would make impossible most of the abuses of the present travel allowance scheme under which MEPs can make tens of thousands of pounds a year. The European Parliament's travel bill every year for 625 MEPs from 15 countries costs £18m.

Now, MEPs' salaries are paid out of national budgets and are set at the level of parliamentarians in each member state. British MPs are paid

£45,066, the same as Westminster parliamentarians, and the common salary is likely to be worth £1,000 to 2,000 more, depending on the exchange rate. MEPs will still enjoy an allowance of £2,200 a month for office management.

Bankers in Switzerland are trying to cash in on German fears of a change in tax policy after the recent election victory of the Social Democrats. Banks say there has been an increase in the number of Germans flying in with their money as they fear a new wealth tax. The banks are increasing their advertising in Germany.

Poles move to arrest don's wife

THE MILITARY Court in Warsaw ruled in favour of issuing an arrest warrant for the wife of an Oxford don yesterday over her alleged role as a military prosecutor in Stalinist-era Poland.

The decision is the latest move in a campaign by the Polish military authorities to extradite Helena Brus. Mrs Brus, 79, is the wife of Wlodzimierz Brus, emeritus professor of modern Russian and East European studies and a fellow of Wolfson College.

Mrs Brus, formerly known as Helena Wolinska, is accused of illegally ordering the arrest

BY ADAM LEBOR
in Warsaw

in 1951 of General Emil Fieldorf, a high-ranking commander of the Polish national resistance, the Home Army (AK) and one of Poland's leading war heroes.

During the 1950s Poland, with its eastern European neighbours, was ruled by hard-line Stalinists who took orders from Moscow.

Communist officials hunted down, tried and executed many members of the AK, despite its record of fighting the Nazis, as they feared that members of the wartime AK might form the nu-

cleus of an anti-Soviet underground movement.

The Polish military prosecutor will now formally tell Mrs Brus of the decision. She will then have seven days to appeal, a spokesman for the Polish Justice Ministry said. Any appeal will then go to a higher military court. Polish sources said it was likely any appeal would be rejected.

The way would then be open for the Polish Justice Ministry formally to request her extradition from Britain. That gives rise to the spectre of a controversy similar to that surrounding General Augusto

Pinochet - a pensioner being extradited for alleged crimes committed decades ago.

Mrs Brus left Poland after an anti-semitic campaign in 1968. She has denied that she charged General Fieldorf. She said that she was not involved in his arrest and had been involved in Poland's anti-Nazi resistance. She said she could not expect a fair trial in Poland.

General Fieldorf was accused of attempting to overthrow the Polish state. He was hanged in 1953, but posthumously rehabilitated in 1989, after the downfall of the Communist regime.

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14/FOREIGN NEWS

US accused of hypocrisy on human rights

A LEADING human rights group has delivered a harsh critique of the American record, accusing Washington of tolerating systematic abuses within the United States - in other words of failing to practise itself what it preaches so loudly and self-righteously to others.

In its latest annual report published today, Human Rights Watch lists a whole series of shortcomings by the US.

These include the denial of full human rights to certain minority groups, including homosexuals and immigrants, a particularly brutal prison system, and capital punishment, of which the US is among the world's most zealous practitioners, exceeded only by such countries as China, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The largest US-based human rights group claimed the Clinton administration's policy on the subject suffered from "large blindspots," and that human rights rarely ranked with its other interests.

Ignorance of international human rights norms is widespread, the group says.

"Both the federal and state authorities have resisted applying to the US the standards that the US, quite rightly, applies elsewhere."

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

Nor does Britain escape censure, despite the Northern Ireland peace agreement, which addresses the main source of human rights abuses of which the UK is regularly accused.

On paper, the deal's human rights provisions are strong, the report notes. But the British Government had shown little commitment when it comes to translating words into action - as evidenced by the granting of even wider powers to the security forces after the Omagh bombing in August.

Despite the continuing violations of human rights in scores of countries around the world, Human Rights Watch is upbeat about the progress that has been achieved in the 50 years since the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose anniversary falls next week.

Over the past half century, human rights has been transformed from something of a dilettante cause to "the legitimate concern of the international community."

The arrest of, and the subsequent denial of immunity to General Augusto Pinochet of Chile "makes a nice anniversary present," said the group's

director, Kenneth Roth. But he called for a permanent international system of justice, "to make sure no despot gets away with his crimes."

The key to this, he argues, is quick ratification of the treaty setting up the UN-sponsored international court of justice, agreed by 120 nations in Rome last July, and now signed by 133. But here again Washington is taken to task.

Alone of the world's major developed nations, the US refuses to sign up to the international court, placing it in a select group with Iraq, Libya, China and Iran. The Clinton administration has also cold-shouldered initiatives seeking to outlaw landmines, and the recruitment of child soldiers.

Even when Washington does sign to ratify international treaties, Human Rights Watch says, it typically "carves away added protection for those in the US," by tacking on various reservations, declarations and understandings.

Among the special problem areas singled out by the report are many African countries, the "depressingly familiar" abuses across much of South Asia, and countries such as Algeria and Afghanistan, torn by violence and civil war.



A death row prisoner in a Texas jail. Washington has been criticised for having a 'human rights blindspot', particularly in its use of capital punishment and the harsh treatment of inmates. Mike Moore

Gaddafi 'deal' on Libyan suspects

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

HOPES WERE rising yesterday for an agreement on the delivery of two Libyan suspects in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing to stand trial in the Netherlands, following confirmation from the United Nations Secretary General, that he is to hold talks with Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader tomorrow.

"Yes, I will go to Libya on Saturday," Kofi Annan said while on a visit to the Tunisian capital, Tunis, yesterday. "We are going to look at a solution to the problem." Asked whether he expected to meet with Mr Gaddafi, Mr Annan answered: "I believe so."

Deadlock over the two Libyans, Abdel Basset Ali Mohammed al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah, showed signs of ending in August when Britain and the United States agreed to allow the pair to be tried outside the US or Scotland. Both governments offered The Hague as the venue for a trial, though it would be presided over by Scottish judges. Since then, negotiations between Libya and the United Nations have become snarled up in detail.

In exchange for surrendering the two men, Libya would finally be relieved of the UN sanctions that have effectively isolated it from the rest of the world, for example by banning flights to and from it.

White House prepares for 20 years of redecorating

THE GLISTENING mansion that occupies possibly the most famous address in the world is about to go through that most American of experiences, a makeover.

Number 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington DC - the White House - will undergo its most comprehensive overhaul since the city of Washington was laid out in 1791. Assuming the plans receive the approval of

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

Congress and the public, who will have their chance to comment, the project will take 20 years to complete.

Phase one, which focuses on clearing the clutter from inside and outside the building, may be finished by the time the next occupant, be it Al Gore, George Bush Jr or someone

different, takes up residence in 2001. The first priority - creating a large underground car park to the south of the White House - could make the secret entrances and exits, made known through the confessions of Monica Lewinsky, a thing of the past.

Ms Lewinsky, instead of walking from the open car park, to be ushered in through a non-visitor and non-staff entrance, would be able to park her car underground and make her way through monitored passages into the building.

The plan is for the President and his family to have a large "recreation area" to function as a "den, gym and entertainment space".

With relatively modest living quarters concentrated in one wing of the building, Mr Clinton had little choice but the corridor off the Oval Office for his assignments with Monica.

Clearing the area of cars is also intended to offer visitors a freer vista of the White House's impressive southern aspect.

Another priority is to provide space for all the paraphernalia of banquets and other state occasions. The Park Service, which manages the White House and grounds and has overseen the remodelling plan,

says: "Closets, corridors and driveways overflow with furniture and equipment, as though the staff were having a sale."

As now, tourists will have to gather at a visitor centre, a short distance from the White House, if they want to tour the building; they could, however, be transported underground on a moving pavement.

Television pictures of the White House Press briefing

room give the impression of a dignified space appropriate to the political centre of the western hemisphere. Turn the camera the other way, and the reality is different: it is a crowded mess as there is simply no room for anyone to put everything. The new plans call for a spanking new media centre to be built underground.

What will not come is the end of the much-resented closure of

Pennsylvania Avenue, to the north of the White House, a thoroughfare as much part of Washington as the National Mall and Independence Avenue. Blocked, and clumsily barricaded in 1995, after a gunman took a pot shot that landed uncomfortably close to the presidential offices, any reopening must be approved on security grounds, and that prospect seems remote.

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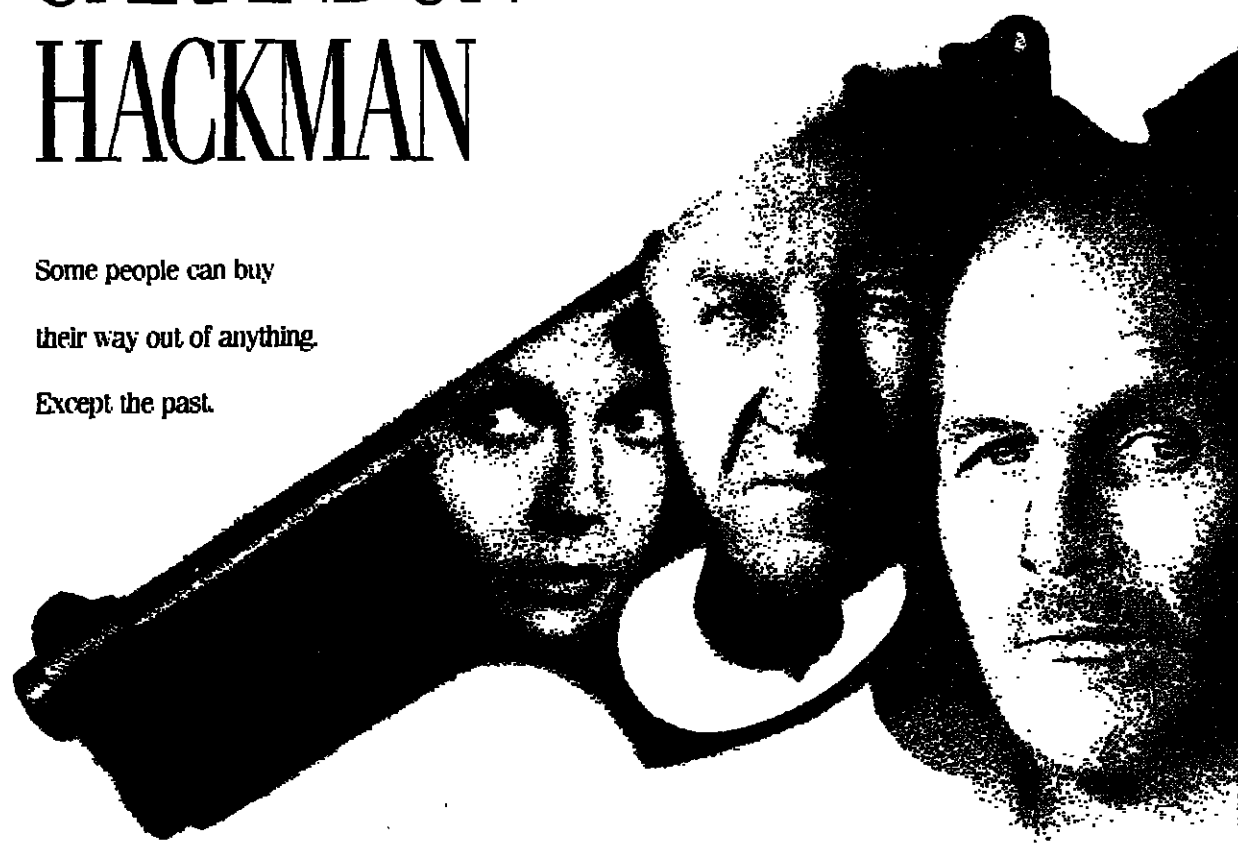
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STARTS TODAY AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Rate

EUROPEAN CENTRAL bankers seem to be doing a passable imitation of those cartoon characters who keep running beyond the cliff edge, but suddenly plunge earthwards when finally they come to look down. The bankers looked down, and decided interest rate cuts might be a good idea after all.

It is only a month since the head of the new European Central Bank, Wim Duisenberg, said lower borrowing costs were unnecessary - a message repeated in briefings by other European central bankers. And it is less than two months since the EC poured cold water on the idea that a round of co-ordinated interest rate cuts was needed; 54 central banks around the globe have since coincidentally cut rates.

These cuts, which include those in Britain, are a welcome change of pace to global financial markets, and the related economic slowdown. It is a relief to know that even the hawkish bankers - and they have come any tougher than the doves - desist. Hans Tietmeyer, president of the need to stabilise the world economy.

But on a minute, if you want to see a more potent central bank, you will find there is a need to take

News Analysis

Flemish cement ties w Kesw

ANDREW GARFIELD
in London

THE FLEMISH family of companies, which has made its fortune in the UK, yesterday came under fire from the Flemish government. The family's banking empire, which includes a complex deal with the UK's largest bank, Royal Bank of Scotland, has been criticised for its stake in the UK's largest bank, Royal Bank of Scotland, which has been criticised for its stake in the UK's largest bank, Royal Bank of Scotland.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Flemish family of companies, which has made its fortune in the UK, yesterday came under fire from the Flemish government. The family's banking empire, which includes a complex deal with the UK's largest bank, Royal Bank of Scotland, has been criticised for its stake in the UK's largest bank, Royal Bank of Scotland.

The announcement came with a sharp fall in profits for Flemish. They fell from £91.1m in the year last year to £20.8m. John Manser, the Flemish chairman, yesterday said the deal as a great success. He said it would allow the firm to redeploy staff and more freely with access and allow more investment systems.

China fires first shot in Internet war

CHINA'S first alleged internet criminal goes on trial in Shanghai today, facing the possibility of five years or more in jail for "inciting the overthrow of state power".

The charges have been laid against Lin Hai, a 30-year-old computer software executive who is accused of giving 30,000 addresses to an electronic newsletter called VIP Reference. The newsletter is compiled by supporters of the

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Hong Kong

Chinese democracy movement in Washington. It carries news of dissident activity, essays and debates on democratic topics and is said to reach 250,000 addresses in China.

Although most trials in Shanghai are open to the public this one will be held behind closed doors. Li Chunping, a spokesman for the Shanghai

Foreign Affairs Office, said: "Because this case involves government internal affairs, it is not public."

The trial is being seen by dissidents as an opening salvo in the war waged by the authorities to prevent the Internet from becoming an important source of anti-government information.

A growing number of Chinese dissidents based in the United States have seized upon

the Internet as a means of circumventing China's tight censorship laws. Unlike most material on the World Wide Web, these sites are written in Chinese characters and often provide up-to-date news on political developments in China.

The overseas dissidents are beyond the reach of the Chinese authorities but people such as Mr Li, who are in a position to supply e-mail addresses with- in the country, are vulnerable.

Before Mr Li's arrest in March, China's main way of tackling Internet "infiltration of subversive ideas" was to set up so-called firewalls, which filter access to websites considered to be unacceptable. It does this by scanning the Web for key words such as "democracy" and "pornography" and putting a block on all sites that contain these words.

The firewalls can easily be circumvented by Internet users

who link up to proxy servers - neutral websites that serve as links to other sites on the Web.

China has an estimated 1.2 million Internet accounts, which are shared by many more users. A cyber cafe craze is sweeping through China, giving Internet access to the majority of the population, who own neither a computer nor a private telephone line. Most of these cafes are linked to proxy servers to give users access to

forbidden websites. This fact is well publicised.

Meanwhile the Chinese government is making efforts to create better-quality official websites to aid its propaganda effort and focus on non-controversial topics. Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation is the only foreign organisation to be actively involved in this effort. It has formed a joint venture with the Communist Party's mouthpiece newspa-

per, the People's Daily, called ChinaByte. It focuses on information technology news.

It was Mr Murdoch who said in 1993 that technological advances in communications were "an unambiguous threat to totalitarian regimes everywhere". With the trial of Mr Li and other measures, such as co-operation with Mr Murdoch's company, the Chinese authorities are trying to prove him wrong.

Babies die in Manila inferno

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARKY

AT LEAST 28 people, many of them babies and young children, were burnt to death in Manila yesterday in a fire at one of the city's slum orphanages.

Six adults and twenty-two children were confirmed dead after being trapped in the upper floors of the three-storey Asuncion de Damas de Pilipinas orphanage, which burnt down yesterday morning in the Paco district of Manila.

Throughout the day, firemen and rescue workers carried small bundles of remains from the ruins of the 78-year-old building. Many of the bodies were beyond recognition and two children were still unaccounted for last night.

The bodies of 13 children were found huddled together in a singleroom and near by was the body of an adult who appeared to have been trying to protect two other children.

"I heard babies crying at one end of the building but we could not reach them because the flames were spreading rapidly and we could not stand the heat," said Tobias Roman, who worked at the orphanage.

Party decorations lay strewn around the ruins of the building, in preparation for the orphanage's Christmas party, which was to have been



A survivor of the Manila orphanage fire clutching a pet rooster in a shelter yesterday; at least 28 died in the blaze, mostly children AP

held today. Most of the 43 survivors were sleeping on the ground floor, but those above were trapped behind locked windows after the fire took hold of the stairs.

"I was sleeping on the

ground floor when I was woken up," said Carina Bellosillo, a teacher. "Already, the ceiling was on fire and the stairs going up to the second floor were burning. I wanted to go upstairs to save the babies, but my com-

panions pulled me back." Another teacher said: "I was able to get eight children out from one of the rooms but three others were left behind. I don't know what happened to them." Some of the dead appear to

have been trapped by locked doors. City officials announced an investigation after reports that the fire brigade took an hour to reach the scene. Members of the Manila police arson unit said the fire appeared to

have been caused by faulty electrical wiring.

The President, Joseph Estrada, visited the disaster scene. "I will raise funds personally," he said. "I will do everything I can to rebuild this place."

Taliban sends assassins to quell dissent

BY JASON BURKE
in Quetta

ASSASSINS linked to the Taliban government of Afghanistan are attacking enemies of the hard-line Islamic regime who have sought sanctuary abroad.

Gangs of gunmen commissioned by the movement are blamed for the deaths of at least four prominent opposition figures in recent months. Dozens of other enemies of the regime - often intellectuals or human rights campaigners - have been intimidated or harassed.

The most recent attack was in Mastung, south-west Pakistan. Mullah Sorkatib - a senior commander in a rival faction who fled Afghanistan two years ago - was seriously wounded in the jaw and arm and his personal guard was killed when four men, armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, forced their way into his home.

Local police said last week they had arrested one of Sorkatib's attackers, who claimed that the group had been commissioned by a senior figure in the Taliban. They were to receive 250,000 rupees (£3,300) each if they were successful, the man said. The Taliban has strongly denied any involvement.

Last month another squad of gunmen shot dead a leading campaigner for democracy in Afghanistan in a bazaar in the western Pakistani city of Peshawar. Mohammed Hashim Paktyanai had organised a

meeting of dissidents to mark the anniversary of the death of the former Afghan president Najibullah, who was killed by the Taliban two years ago. Paktyanai's family said he had been receiving death threats for some time.

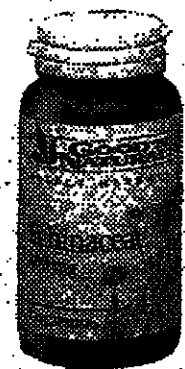
Two other opponents of the Taliban - both connected with the Communist regime that ruled Afghanistan in the Eighties - have been shot and killed in recent months in Quetta, a city in south-west Pakistan. One, Nazam Mohammed, 65, was the head and founder of the Movement for Peace in Afghanistan, which he claimed had more than 100,000 members around the world.

There has also been a string of attacks on intellectuals and women's rights activists in Peshawar.

Observers say the attacks are part of a general crackdown by the Taliban - which controls 90 per cent of Afghanistan - on ideological opponents, inside and outside the country. Several hundred dissidents alleged to be planning a coup were jailed in October.

Though the Taliban is supported by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, many other regional powers - including Iran - are working hard to destabilise the regime.

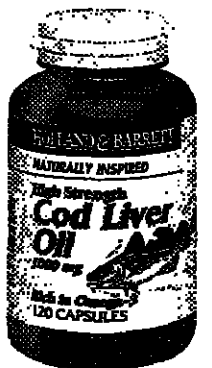
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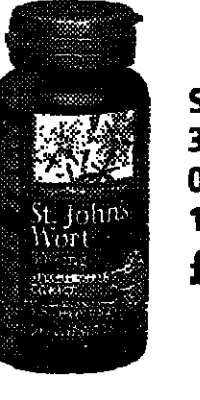
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Bolshoi seeks white knight for the opera

THE RUSSIAN government and the United Nations are launching an international appeal for money to restore the Bolshoi Theatre, which is on the verge of falling down.

Chandeliers have yet to drop on the heads of the opera-loving public in Moscow but the 19th-century wooden foundations are rotting and pipes recently burst in the administrative offices, spraying scalding water on to the desks of managers.

News of the fund-raising drive came earlier this week after the first meeting of a new Russian-UNESCO organising committee. The campaign will be launched at a charity performance in May but those interested can now visit the Bolshoi's Internet website on www.bolshoi.ru.

"The Bolshoi Theatre is not only our national heritage but the heritage of the whole world," said Valentina

BY HELEN WOMACK
in Moscow

Matviyenko, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Russia's social policy. Russia might be having difficulty paying wages and pensions, but the significance of the Bolshoi was such that funding would be found, she said. Any additional contributions from abroad would be welcome.

On a par with the wonders of Prague and Venice it may be, but the 173-year-old Bolshoi is in a very sorry state. Damp is rising from an underground river and the original wooden foundations are disintegrating. Not only that, but the building has not been rewired since the 1940s.

"There is no danger to the public, otherwise we would have closed the theatre," said the administrative director, Vladimir Kozlov. However, in his next breath, he admitted



Moscow's Mayor Yuri Luzhkov (left) is trying to get international support to renovate the Bolshoi, which has foundations that are disintegrating

that a "fountain" of hot water had overwhelmed his desk when the pipes burst a few days ago.

The Bolshoi management intends to keep the familiar outward appearance of the pink-stucco theatre, changing only "dated symbols" such as the Stalin-era stage curtains with their hammer and sickle de-

signs. However, in many invisible ways, the structure will be strengthened and modern facilities provided. Experts have been consulted to ensure that whatever alterations are made the acoustics do not suffer. The estimated cost of the 10-year project is \$350m (£218m).

Already, with the help of Moscow Mayor, Yuri Luzhkov,

an alternative stage has been built, so that the troupe of the Bolshoi can remain in the public eye during the renovation. Despite the economic crisis, Ms Matviyenko said the federal government had found \$45m to start work on the main building and this month Russian firms would be invited to tender for jobs.

The Bolshoi may be crumbling physically but spiritually, it is in better health than for years under its new artistic director, the former dancer Vladimir Vasilyev. New ballets for Christmas and the new year have been previewed. And February will see the opening of *Oprichnitsk*, Tchaikovsky's rarely performed opera about

the secret police under Ivan the Terrible, which would have been politically incorrect in Communist times. Mr Vasilyev, who criticised the way the Bolshoi used to sit on its laurels when it held a monopoly, would be the first to admit that his theatre has benefited from some healthy competition.

Just up the road is the Novaya Opera (New Opera) of Vladimir Kolobov, who spent years working in a disused cinema until Mayor Luzhkov built him a splendid new opera house. And there are also several opera studios that help to make Moscow, in the dead of economic winter, a musical boom-town.

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DiCaprio film 'spoils' sacred Thai island

BY SARAH STRICKLAND
in Bangkok

ON A tiny island off southern Thailand a war is being waged between environmentalists and British film producers over a Hollywood adaptation of the best-selling novel *The Beach*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Tilda Swinton.

The production team behind the film *Trainspotting* has unwittingly sparked controversy over its plans to film on Ko Phi Phi Leh in the Andaman Sea. The island is a sacred site and a protected national park where officially not a flower may be picked or a stone overturned. But 20th Century Fox gained permission in October to dig up the island's Maya Bay, remove shrubs and plant 100 coconut trees.

When the bulldozer moved in, the accusations that Thai law was "up for sale" grew so loud that the Forestry Department suspended its permission for two weeks pending an inquiry. Its decision is expected today but protesters have decided



DiCaprio: Producers were allowed to dig up shrubs

not to wait and are risking arrest by occupying Maya Bay, which they say has already been irreversibly damaged.

"This was not supposed to happen," said a spokeswoman from the Forestry Department. "It will prevent the film crew starting their work."

The production is facing allegations that it has paid protection money and even hired armed guards.

Alex Garland's *The Beach* follows the adventures of a group of backpackers who join

a utopian community on unspoiled land. They encounter a group of armed "goons" guarding a marijuana plantation.

The fact that Maya Bay is not quite perfect enough in the eyes of Hollywood is an irony that has not escaped environmentalists. "Most wild beaches have bushes not coconut trees but that doesn't conform to Hollywood's idea of a tropical island," said Ing Kijjanavithit, a green protester.

The Forestry Department originally argued that he film would promote Thailand as a tourist destination, something it does not appear to need.

Andrew Macdonald, producer, says he and the director, Danny Boyle, thought they had gone through all the right channels when seeking permission. "We never expected to be faced with criticism," he said in a letter to the Bangkok Post.

The company has paid £26,000 to film on the island with a deposit of £23,000 against damage, a small figure compared with the £12m DiCaprio is expected to earn.

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BUSINESS

Slowdown fears prompt mass European rate cuts

Brazil shares in new turmoil

BRIEFING

Halifax restructures business

HALIFAX SAID yesterday it was restructuring its business and making changes to its board. This is its first major announcement since James Crosby's appointment as chief executive. Roger Boyes, group finance director, will hand responsibility for corporate finance to Glen Polwell, deputy chief executive. John Miller, Housing and Technology director, will leave to pursue other business interests. Mike Ellis, formerly Treasurer, will become retail financial services director in charge of a newly merged product division. Halifax used to operate separate mortgage, banking and financial services arms, with separate lines of reporting. Mr Ellis will also be in charge of all sales of Halifax branded products. Clerical Medical will remain a distinct company.

BA warns of air travel slowdown



BRITISH AIRWAYS warned that the outlook for air travel continued to be uncertain as it reported a further weakening in yields for November. The airline, headed by chief executive Robert Ayling (pictured), said business and first class traffic was down by 2.9 per cent compared with a 2.4 per cent fall the previous month as more passengers switched to flying economy, particularly on transatlantic routes.

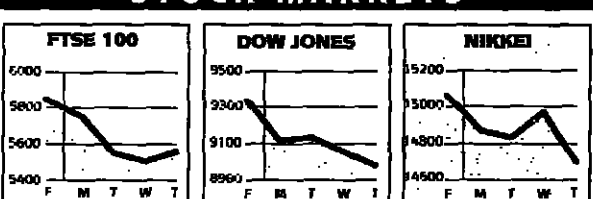
Radical pay structure at Siemens

SIEMENS, the German electronics and engineering giant, is to introduce a radical new pay structure for its 500 top managers which will mean that only 40 per cent of salary will be fixed. Of the balance, half will be an annual bonus linked to financial targets and half will be based on performance over three years. Siemens also said it could seek a share listing in New York in summer 2001, following changes to its capital structure and accounting methods.

Battle go-ahead for power station

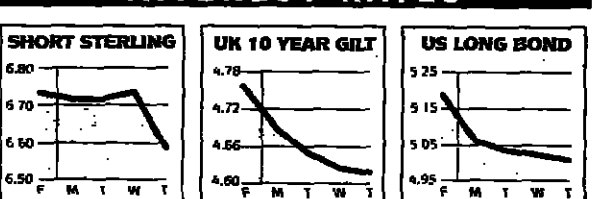
THE GOVERNMENT yesterday gave the go-ahead to the first combined heat and power stations since it reaffirmed its moratorium on consents for any further gas-fired plant in September. John Battle, Energy Minister, has approved a 215-megawatt CHP station next to the Shotton paper mill in Flintshire and a 56 megawatt station at Castleford, Yorkshire.

STOCK MARKETS



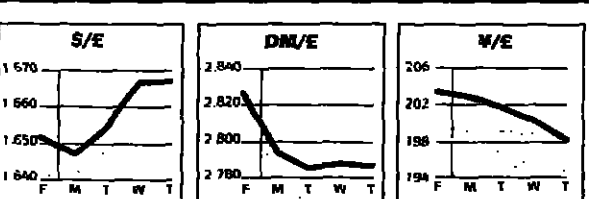
Index	Close	Change	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5566.10	-58.90	6183.00	4599.00	3.38
FTSE 250	4756.60	-47.80	5070.91	4247.59	4.87
FTSE 350	2638.00	-19.00	2969.00	2210.00	3.62
FTSE All Share	2547.35	-16.55	2886.52	2143.53	3.65
FTSE SmallCap	2021.40	-15.40	2799.00	1834.00	4.18
FTSE Pledging	1122.50	-7.20	1517.10	1046.20	0.00
FTSE AIM	863.30	-3.70	1146.90	761.30	0.00
FTSE EBLIC 100	923.24	-1.14	1.25		
Dow Jones	9879.32	-91.14	10193.80	7400.30	1.67
Nikkei	14697.08	-289.54	17352.00	12787.00	1.00
Hang Seng	10046.15	-9.63	11926.16	6544.79	3.11
Dax	4787.08	95.39	6217.83	3833.71	1.66

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	3 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	20 year
UK	6.83	-0.92	6.25	-1.68	4.63	-1.88	4.43	-1.99	
US	5.25	-0.69	5.00	-1.05	4.57	-1.01	5.01		
Japan	0.48	-0.24	0.35	-0.25	1.13	-0.76	1.81	-0.72	
Germany	3.64	-0.72	3.44	-0.65	3.94	-1.48	4.81	-1.16	

CURRENCIES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	3 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	20 year
US Dollar	1.6677	+0.50c	1.6451						
DM-Mark	2.7867	+0.57pf	2.9743						
Yen	198.04	+1.63	215.94						
£ index	100.20	+0.00	105.30						

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	19.02	0.18	17.99	GDP	115.40	3.00	117.04
Gold (\$)	292.95	-0.45	292.15	RPI	164.50	3.10	159.55
Silver (\$)	4.89	-0.18	5.32	Base Rates	6.75	7.25	

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.5695	Mexican (nuevo peso)	15.10
Austria (schillings)	18.98	Netherlands (guilder)	3.0423
Belgium (francs)	55.76	New Zealand (\$)	3.0435
Canada (\$)	2.4923	Norway (krone)	12.04
Cyprus (pounds)	0.7982	Portugal (escudos)	274.65
Denmark (krone)	10.33	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0738
Finland (markka)	8.1981	Singapore (\$)	2.6184
France (francs)	9.0496	Spain (pesetas)	229.37
Germany (marks)	2.7068	South Africa (rand)	9.0926
Greece (drachma)	445.83	Sweden (krone)	13.14
Hong Kong (\$)	12.52	Switzerland (franc)	2.2178
Ireland (pounds)	1.0852	Thailand (baht)	55.03
India (rupees)	63.76	Turkey (lira)	487.776
Israel (shekels)	6.4623	USA (\$)	1.6282
Italy (lira)	2.666		
Japan (yen)	194.98		
Malaysia (ringgit)	6.0737		
Malta (lira)	0.6079		

BY DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

EUROPE'S CENTRAL banks announced a dramatic co-ordinated cut in interest rates yesterday, ahead of the launch of the euro on 1 January. The Bundesbank led the way, reducing its key rate to 3 per cent from 3.5 per cent.

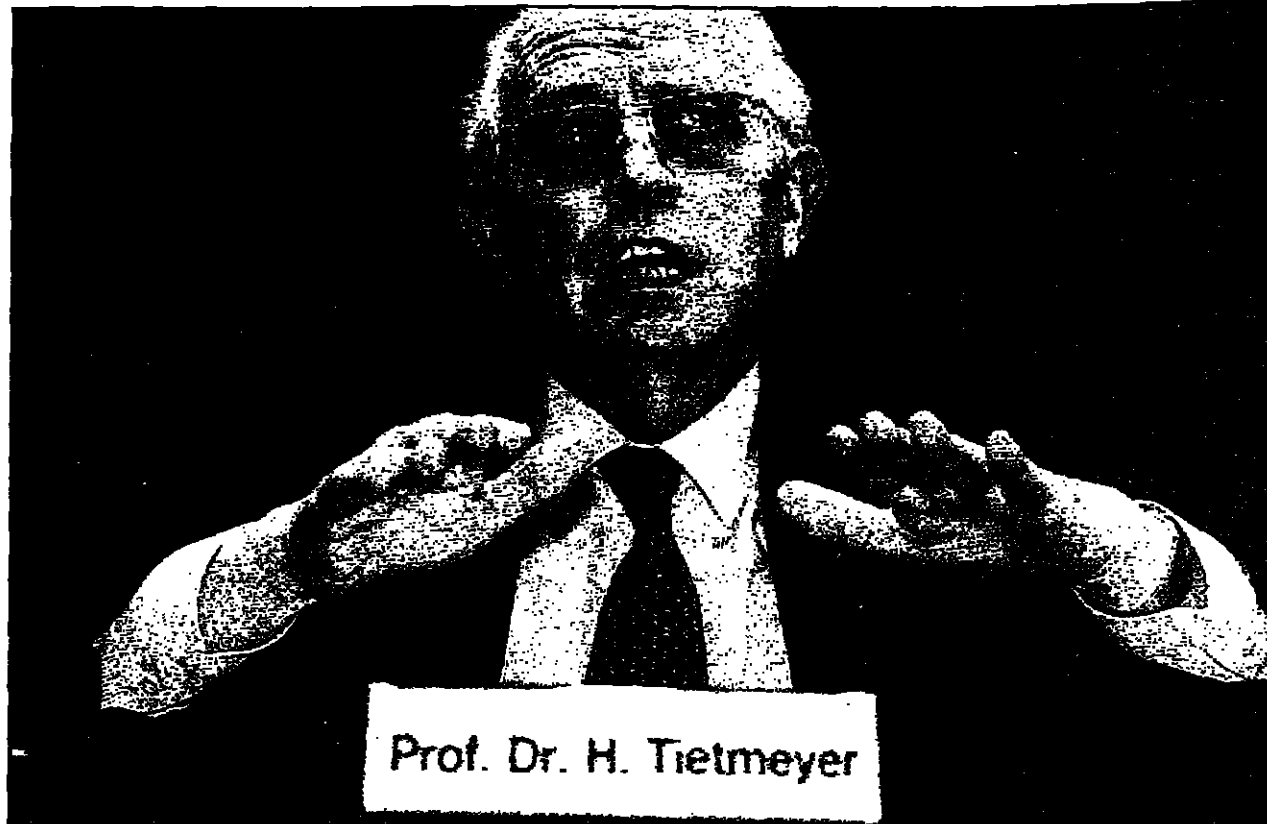
The surprise move raised to fever pitch expectations that the Bank of England will reduce UK interest rates again after next week's meeting of its Monetary Policy Committee. Two new business surveys published yesterday indicated that the economic slowdown has spread beyond manufacturing into retailing and services.

European central bankers were responding to fears of a global recession in the wake of the autumn's financial turbulence. Yesterday's announcements brought to 54 the number of central banks worldwide that have cut the cost of borrowing since the beginning of October.

The financial markets were delighted by this latest step in what clearly emerges as a co-ordinated series of moves by central banks since October's Group of Seven meeting in Washington. "Interest rates are coming down globally at some speed, and it is necessary that they do," said Michael Hughes, a director of Barings Asset Management.

The FTSE-100 index ended the day nearly 58 points higher at 5,566.1. But Wall Street was overshadowed by fears over Brazil, with the Dow Jones index 74 points lower at 9,879.32 by late morning.

All of the Euro zone countries except Italy now have interest



Hans Tietmeyer, Bundesbank president, announces the rate cut in Frankfurt yesterday

rates at 3 per cent, with Italy still at 3.5 per cent.

Hans Tietmeyer, Bundesbank president, said the move reflected economic conditions and cleared the ground for the new European Central Bank.

But he denied the bankers were responding to pressure for a rate cut from politicians, including Oskar Lafontaine, German's powerful new finance minister. Economists agreed that the move was justified by the prospect of an economic slowdown. "It reflects a collapse in

consumer confidence across Europe," said Michael Lewis of Deutsche Bank.

The latest evidence of slowdown in the UK was provided by news that retailers last month suffered their biggest fall in confidence in the 15 years they have been surveyed by the Confederation of British Industry. While 36 per cent said sales in the past three months had been higher than a year earlier, 45 per cent said they were down.

The CBI said some sectors had stayed robust, and retailers

expected business to pick up for Christmas. But it warned that volumes might grow only at the expense of profit margins.

A separate survey from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply showed the first fall in activity in the service sector, which makes up two-thirds of the economy. "This points to growth very much grinding to a halt," said Adam Cole of HSBC Markets, although he said the UK was still on course for a soft landing.

The CBI welcomed the European interest rate cuts and called on the Bank of England to follow up with a half point reduction in UK rates to 6.25 per cent next week. "Inflationary pressures are minimal across Europe and the real danger is from a slowdown in growth," said Adair Turner, director general.

Marian Bell, an economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, warned: "The Bank should cut rates next week but it could be too late to prevent a recession next year."

BY LEA PATERSON

BRAZILIAN SHARES plunged yesterday, reigniting fears of further turmoil in the financial markets, after the government failed to persuade opposition politicians to back a key part of its fiscal austerity plan.

By lunchtime in Sao Paulo, Brazil's leading Bovespa index was down 9.5 per cent on worries that the government would be unable to implement crucial cuts in public borrowing.

US banks and hedge funds have substantial exposure to Brazil and analysts fear that if the Brazilian economy falters, this could mean more chaos in world financial markets.

Jim O'Neill, head of global strategy at Goldman Sachs, said: "These developments do not set a good precedent."

The defeat of proposed social security reforms, which would have saved \$2.2bn (£1.4bn) next year, put the Brazilian real under new pressure. The Brazilian Central Bank was reported to be selling dollars in an attempt to prop up the currency.

All Latin American stock markets were hit by the developments in Brazil, as was Wall Street, where the Dow dipped below the 9,000 mark. Emerging debt markets also had a volatile session, with Brazilian dollar bonds down by as much as 4.5 per cent.

Ironically, the Congressional defeat coincided with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) decision to release the first tranche - \$5.3bn - of the country's \$11.5bn rescue package. The deal, announced last month, was designed to prevent the emerging market chaos spreading to Latin America.

Large steps back at Barclays

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

SIR ANDREW LARGE, the deputy chairman of Barclays Bank, yesterday became the latest casualty of the boardroom bust-up at the bank, which last week saw Martin Taylor quit as chief executive.

Barclays said that Sir Andrew, who clashed repeatedly with Taylor before he quit, is to give up his executive role to become non-executive deputy chairman from 1 January. Next year he will be at the bank one day a week instead of the four he works now, and his salary will be reduced accordingly.

Barclays yesterday denied that the decision to scale down Sir Andrew's role was prompted



Sir Andrew Large: Giving up his executive role

by the recent turmoil at the bank. "This has nothing to do with the departure of Martin Taylor last week, this has been in the works for two-and-a-half

months," a spokesman said. The bank said there were no plans for any other boardroom changes at the moment.

In the City the decision to reduce Sir Andrew's role was welcomed, with analysts arguing that the way in which Mr Taylor's departure was handled raised serious questions about the way the bank was run.

Some had expressed surprise at the way the board appeared to have been too heavy with directors, who were executive in name only and having no clear area of responsibility were naturally drawn into areas where they had no obvious role.

Richard Coleman, banks analyst at Merrill Lynch, the investment bank "I think what is important is that these corpo-

rate governance issues that have emerged over the last few days are made clear before Barclays proceeds to appoint a new chief executive."

Sir Andrew, who joined Barclays from the Securities and Investments Board, had been criticised for seeking to second-guess Mr Taylor's decisions in a way which antagonised not just Mr Taylor but other board members as well.

Sir Andrew's hostility towards the former chief executive was said to have been a result of Mr Taylor blocking Sir Andrew's attempt to become chairman of Barclays Capital, Barclays investment banking operation. He had worked in the City at Swiss Bank Corporation prior to joining SIB.

GEC 'weeks' away from mega-merger

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

US, where GEC has recently completed the \$200m takeover of the defence contractor Tracor. Forty per cent of Marconi Electronic Systems' business is now with the Pentagon.

Referring to the Americans' "paranoia" about security and the difficult relations they had with the French on defence, he said: "Clearly if we went down the French route we would have to bear in mind the implications for our existing and future business in the US."

Lord Simpson also dismissed speculation that GEC might merge with France's Alcatel, which holds a 16 per cent stake in Thomson CSF.

GEC's cash pile stands at £1.2bn and it has a further £4bn of credit facilities, giving it enough firepower to launch a major acquisition. In the US, attention has focussed on Northrop Grumman, which was blocked from merging with Lockheed Martin earlier this year. Litton Industries and ITT Industries.

The job losses will fall mainly in Essex where Marconi Communications is closing a cable manufacturing plant at Dagenham and merging two telecoms businesses in Chelmsford, following its acquisition of Siemens' 40 per cent stake in GPT.

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GUS renews its attack on Argos

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

GREAT UNIVERSAL Stores renewed its attack on the former Argos directors yesterday claiming they should be "shown the yellow card" for what it claims were inaccurate statements made during the company's £1.9bn bid for Argos.

Failure to do so, Lord Wolfson, GUS's chairman, said, would risk making a "car boot sale out of takeover bids".

Lord Wolfson said he would consider taking his case to the Department of Trade and Industry, the High Court and the House of Lords if his second approach to the takeover panel is turned down.

"Showing the yellow card would mean a public rebuke saying 'don't do it again'. If [the panel] don't do that it means economy with the truth is acceptable. We don't think that is a good regulatory regime," he said.

GUS's claims centre on statements made by Argos about its fledgling operations in Holland. Argos said initial sales were "ahead of expectations".

GUS claims that having obtained the management accounts it is clear that sales

were substantially below forecasts and that Argos failed to reveal this to the market. Under panel rules "any material change in any information" should be released.

However, it is understood that cumulative sales at Argos in Holland were ahead of expectations throughout the duration of the bid, although they may have dipped below budget on particular weeks.

The former Argos directors deny any breach. The panel has also said it is satisfied the code was adhered to. It has written to GUS saying it will consider its renewed claim.

However, it is understood that the panel has not seen anything in GUS's new claims to make it change its mind.

The comments came as GUS reported a sharp fall in first-half profits from £261m to £176.1m. This was in line with an earlier warning on profits which said that trading profit from the Argos and Metromail database acquisitions would be weighted towards the second half.

Argos sales in October and November were 4 per cent below the same period last year. The grim news forced GUS shares 25p lower to 549p, their lowest point since 1995.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

SHARES CLOSED higher for the first time in four days yesterday boosted by hopes of an interest rate cut next week.

The FTSE-100 index had a roller-coaster session. It closed 58.9 higher at 5,566.1 after swinging in a 182-point arc. A gloomy CBI survey and worries over Wall Street caused a bout of selling in the morning. The losses were wiped out in early afternoon following a raft of interest rate cuts in the euro-zone. The monetary easing in Europe fuelled hopes of a cut by the Bank of England next week.

NEW YORK

A PLUNGING Brazilian market reawakened fears of large Latin American losses, pulling the Dow Jones back below the 9,000 threshold.

J.P. Morgan fell 4 per cent, accounting for one fifth of the fall in the index, while Merrill Lynch dropped nearly 4 per cent.

Computer and telecommunications stocks rose, and there was hope that the European interest rate cut could stimulate exports. "This is good news for the marketplace," one trader said.

TOKYO

CONCERN THAT a weakening dollar and a strengthening yen would scupper an export-led recovery resulted in the Nikkei's largest fall in three weeks. By the close the index had dropped 2 per cent to 14,697.

Sony Corp, Fuji and Canon, who increasingly rely on buoyancy in the US economy to offset sluggish domestic sales, accounted for an eighth of the index's decline.

"There is a widening perception that a US slowdown is only a matter of time. The stronger yen is certainly putting pressure on exporter's profits," one dealer said.

HONG KONG

HONG KONG shares staged a late comeback to recoup early afternoon losses, finishing at 10,046.15, a slight fall on the day.

Property shares pulled the market out of its stupor, as the government announced it would allow mortgage loans of up to 85 per cent of a property's value, attracting lower income buyers to the market.

Sun Hung Kai, Hong Kong's largest property company, rose 3.2 per cent to HK\$66.20. The main loser was HSBC Holdings, which fell 1.3 per cent.

FRANKFURT

THE CO-ORDINATED interest rate cut by countries participating in the European Single Currency gave yesterday, with the DAX finishing at 4,812, a 2 per cent rise on the day.

The rally was led by banking shares, with Deutsche Bank rising 3 per cent to close at 99 marks. Deutsche Telekom rose by 3 per cent to the day at 49 marks.

"This is a good buying opportunity, and I think the rate cut was sensible in the light of a slowing European economy," one dealer commented.

Rate cuts may herald more gloom

EUROPEAN CENTRAL bankers seem to be doing a passable imitation of those cartoon characters who keep running beyond the cliff edge, but suddenly plunge earthwards when finally they come to look down. The bankers looked down, and decided interest rate cuts might be a good idea after all.

It is only a month since the head of the new European Central Bank, Wim Duisenberg, said lower borrowing costs were unnecessary – a message repeated in briefings by other European central bankers. And it is less than two months since the G7 poured cold water on the idea that a round of co-ordinated interest-rate cuts was needed; 54 central banks around the globe have since, coincidentally, cut rates.

These cuts, which include two in Britain, are a welcome enough response to global financial turmoil and the related economic slowdown. It is a relief to know that even the most hawkish of bankers – and they do not come any tougher than the Bundesbank's Hans Tietmeyer – have recognised the need to stabilise the world economy.

But hold on a minute. If even the most reluctant central bankers now admit there is a need to take action,



OUTLOOK

what does that say about the outlook? A great deal seems to be the answer, and it is almost uniformly gloomy. Nowhere on the planet is there unrelentingly good economic news; even in the roaring US economy the picture is mixed. While it is true that Alan Greenspan has been cutting US interest rates mainly to prime the world economy, rather than for domestic reasons, his motives are not entirely altruistic. The US cannot remain immune to what's going on elsewhere.

Even more worrying is the possibility that financial markets hold more nasty and destabilising surprises. The Brazil rescue package is on the rocks, with the IMF and G7

committed to defending the indefensible. Given the slightest chance the markets will sink the Brazilian currency with the same gusto as they did the Russian rouble. Other turbulence may lie in store as banks and funds try to unwind earlier loss-making positions before the year-end.

So far, the main Western equity markets have been able to shrug off any setbacks. The extraordinary persistence of the post-war bull market has taught investors that it pays to buy on the dips. What Alan Greenspan described two years ago as irrational exuberance seems to have become eternal exuberance.

What's more, this may be justified. Central banks seem prepared to flood their markets with liquidity far the sake of economic stability. Cheaper money means more expensive financial assets, and that includes equities. Thus even in a recession, when earnings and dividends can be expected to fall, equities are going to be dragged up in value in line with bonds. That, in any case, is the logic of the process. One day the stock market bubble will burst – but not until the bankers feel they can reverse course – or, to put it another way, not until inflation starts to look more likely than deflation once more.

BTR/Siebe

NOBODY SEEMS much to like Siebe's planned merger with BTR. Siebe's shareholders worry that the merger will dilute their company's quality image, and that BTR will prove as unmanageable for Siebe's Allen Yurko as it plainly has been for his opposite number at BTR, Ian Strachen.

Meanwhile BTR shareholders complain that the takeover – for that is what it is in essence – is without premium and does nothing to correct the appalling loss of value they've experienced. Furthermore, they seem to be contributing rather more than half the combined turnover and profits for rather less than half its shares. They question whether the injection of Siebe's management is worth that kind of dilution.

BTR's share price has been in more or less relentless decline ever since Ian Strachen was appointed with the brief of dismantling the sprawling industrial conglomerate created by Sir Owen Green and transforming it into a "focused engineering group". Nobody can fault the underlying sense of this; the problem is that once committed to a pro-

gramme of wholesale asset sales, it is the saleable bits that tend to go first, leaving the dross behind. There is certainly a suspicion that this is what has happened at BTR and that this is one of the reasons its profits are in such precipitous decline.

All the same, hope springs eternal and many BTR shareholders continue to believe there's recovery value in the rump. Plainly Mr Yurko is not going to agree a renegotiation of the terms; he's got enough explaining to do to his own shareholders as it is. So BTR's only hope is that the Siebe deal will shake someone else out of the tree.

With the shares now trading at a 7 per cent premium to the value of Siebe's offer, the market is saying that this is not altogether impossible. A year ago, if anyone had come shopping with an offer of, say, 160p a share cash, he would have been sent away with a flea in his ear. Today shareholders would bite his hand off in their desperation to accept the offer.

There are at least four US engineering companies for whom BTR would make a good fit, though some of these might have a competition problem in bidding. Alternatively, one of Britain's smaller engineering

companies might like to chance their arm with a management buy-in. Both possibilities seem remote, but there's still a chance someone's going to spoil the party.

GUS/Argos

LORD WOLFSON, chairman of Great Universal Stores, just cannot seem to get this Argos business out of his system. He reckons the former Argos directors made inaccurate statements during the heat of the bid battle, and he wants them to suffer a public humiliation to make up for it.

How the language flowed yesterday. The Takeover Panel should show the former Argos team the yellow card, he said. There were clear breaches of the rules and the ref should act. Failure to do so would turn bids into a car-boot sale, he fumed.

Let us look at the facts. In its early defence documents, Argos said sales in its five start-up stores in Holland were "ahead of expectations". Under the terms of the code, companies are supposed to inform the market of "any material change to any information". Having now got hold of the

management accounts, GUS says sales in Holland were 40 per cent below forecasts by the end of the bid.

This is being disputed. Sales may have dipped below forecasts in some weeks, but taken cumulatively sales were ahead of expectations throughout the entire duration of the bid. Was this a change that should have been disclosed?

Having been turned down by the Panel once, Lord Wolfson has made a renewed approach, but his "fresh information" does not seem to have made the executive change its mind. Note: Lord Wolfson is not claiming that these allegedly misleading statements caused him to increase his offer for Argos. Nor is he saying that as a result he paid too much or that he has been sold a pup. But Lord Wolfson is not giving up. He is fighting on a point of principle which his advisers say is a "noble act".

If he loses, shareholders might think otherwise. He is already in danger of appearing vindictive. Using shareholders' money to fight a court case on a point of principle he looks unlikely to win, and which even he admits has inflicted no damage, would be a very strange act indeed. Lord Wolfson has had his tantrum. He should now shut up.

News Analysis: Two of Britain's most powerful dynasties hope to revive an ailing bank

Fleming cements ties with Keswicks

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

THE KESWICK family, one of the most powerful British dynasties to have made its fortunes in Hong Kong, yesterday cemented its tie with the Flemings, one of Britain's oldest banking families, in a complex deal which sees it increasing its stake in the City merchant bank Robert Fleming, from 5 per cent to 17 per cent.

Under the terms of the agreement, struck between Robert Fleming and the Keswick's main Hong Kong investment vehicle Jardine Matheson, Robert Fleming will take full control of Jardine Fleming, its 28-year-old Far Eastern investment banking joint venture.

In return Jardine will receive £40m in cash and new Robert Fleming shares, diluting the Fleming family members' stake from 35 per cent to just over 30 per cent. A second Jardine representative, Rodney Leach, will join Henry Keswick on the Robert Fleming board.

In a further tidying up exercise, Fleming is also buying out Martin & Co, the South African stockbroker from their joint venture Fleming Martin.

The announcement coincided with a sharp fall in profits at Robert Fleming. They were down from \$81.1m in the same period last year to £20.8m.

John Manser, the Robert Fleming chairman, yesterday hailed the deal as a great step forward. He said it would enable the firm to redevelop staff and capital more freely within the business and allow more scope for common systems.

"Quite a lot has changed in the 28 years since we set up Jardine Fleming," he said. "For one thing it is a more global world. It is also a world which works on a functional rather than regional basis."

However, the decision to increase the firm's exposure to Asia at a time when others are reigning back is brave. Unsurprisingly there was an enthusiastic reaction in Hong Kong where most of the recent traffic has been in the other direction. Jardine Fleming lost £2.3m in the first half and despite its prominent position in the merger and acquisition advisory league tables – the investment bankers' Holy Grail – it has had to be pruned back as new issue activity has all but dried up.

Nor has the Keswicks' experience in the UK been particularly happy. They came to the rescue of Trafalgar House when it was nearly sunk by its investment in Davy, a North Sea engineering firm. The investment was not a success, and they sold out to Kvaerner, the Norwegian shipbuilding and construction group that was desperate for a UK base.

The Keswicks fared little better with their food industry group Dairy Farm in the cut-price retailer Kwik Save. With sales plummeting, Kwik Save merged with Somerfield earlier this year.

When whispers first started in the City that something big was afoot at Robert Fleming, many observers expected more dramatic news, like a decision to put the firm up for sale or seek a stock market quotation.

Critics said that Robert Flem-



Henry Keswick (left) is on the board of Robert Fleming, whose chairman is John Manser



MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS - HOW ROBERT FLEMING RANKS

Completed and unconditional deals, 1 January 1998 to 2 December 1998

WORLDWIDE			ASIA			EUROPE		
Rank	Adviser	Value \$bn	Rank	Adviser	Value \$bn	Rank	Adviser	Value \$bn
1	Goldman Sachs	489.2	1	Goldman Sachs	6.7	1	Goldman Sachs	173.0
2	Morgan Stanley Dean Witter	414.4	2	Morgan Stanley Dean Witter	4.7	2	Morgan Stanley Dean Witter	172.7
3	Merrill Lynch	407.7	3	Schroder Group	3.1	3	Credit Suisse First Boston	94.0
4	Salomon Smith Barney	287.9	4	China International Capital	2.9	4	Warburg Dillon Read	81.4
5	Credit Suisse First Boston	266.1	5	Warburg Dillon Read	2.7	5	JP Morgan	73.7
6	Lehman Brothers	210.0	6	BT Alex Brown/Wolfenson	2.3	6	Deutsche Bank	71.5
7	Lazard Houses	198.3	7	Salomon Smith Barney	2.0	7	Lazard Houses	69.6
8	JP Morgan	159.6	8	JP Morgan & Co	1.5	8	Rothschild	59.8
9	Warburg Dillon Read	155.4	9	Lehman Brothers	1.4	9	Merrill Lynch	55.7
10	Chase Manhattan Corp	102.4	10	Grant Samuel and Associates	0.75	10	Schroder	49.3
44	Robert Fleming	6.2	13	Robert Fleming	0.62	30	Robert Fleming	5.5

ings is at a crossroads – over the last few weeks there have been a number of high-profile departures, including Tony Chambers, the chief executive of banking, and Patrick Gifford, the well-respected chairman of Fleming Investment Trust Management.

The firm insists that the departures were amicable, but there is little doubt that there is unhappiness within the firm. Some outside shareholders are also pushing for an exit. But the idea of floating the firm on the stock market or of selling out to a bigger outfit has been opposed by Mr Manser and the chief executive, both of whom have the family's support.

The firm's investment management business is doing well but according to insiders the advisory side of the business was loss-making in the first half. Mr Manser refuses to comment.

Many are wondering whether the decision to build up the equity research and advisory business globally in an attempt to challenge the Lazard's and the Morgan Stanley's has been a mistake. Despite a good run several years ago, and a strong position in both Asia and South Africa, the firm's global position has been sliding.

Mr Gifford, for one, is said to have become increasingly frustrated at the way the asset management side was being milked to pay for the unrealistic ambitions of the investment bankers. But his plan to spin off the asset management side and sell the investment banking business did not find favour with the board.

There would be no shortage of buyers, however. ABN-Amro, the Dutch bank that owns Hoare Govett, JP Morgan, and Paribas, the French investment bank, have recently made approaches. All have been rebuffed. "I like hard times," said Mr Manser. "It sorts the men from the boys."

In a world of financial services giants, Fleming is a rarity – a firm that is not only owned by a family trust but where family members' views carry weight.

Around 12 Flemings are active in the business. Some oddities, such as the insistence on guests consuming only beer, not wine, have disappeared. But others remain.

Despite having been London-based since 1900 when the original Robert Fleming moved

his investment trust business from Dundee, the firm still wears its Scottishness on its sleeve.

Its main non-family backers are Scottish institutions such as Baillie Gifford and Stewart Ivory. The firm also owns the most extensive private collection of Scottish art in existence.

It is a structure that many see as an anachronism which leaves them ill-equipped to cope with an increasingly competitive world. The unravelling of the Jardine joint venture has long been talked about and is sensible as far as it goes.

But there are those who fear it will only postpone the inevitable. "Flemings," said one frustrated non-family shareholder yesterday, "should be sold. It is punching way above its weight".

Shares in RBS leapt 7 per cent yesterday as the bank reported full-year profits up 32 per cent to £1.001bn, well above forecasts. The shares closed up 62p at 932p, valuing the group at £7.67bn. Profits at the main UK retail bank rose by 15 per cent to £780m as it boosted its volume of loans and stabilised lending margins.

Analysts were impressed by a turnaround at Direct Line, the wholly-owned insurer which suffered a slump three years ago as other insurers began to copy its methods. Helped by hardening motor insurance premiums, profits at Direct Line rose 78 per cent to £64m.

Asked about the Halifax, Mr Mathewson added: "Halifax is a legacy business – it is what it is going to be. It does not fit very well with what we do. We are a fast-moving, innovative business with a range of different businesses and if we merged with them, where would the growth come from?"

But Mr Mathewson said the bank still had an appetite for other acquisitions outside the sector, including UK building societies "at the right price".

RBS quashes talk of merger with Halifax

BY ANDREW VERITY

GEORGE MATHEWSON, chief executive of the Royal Bank of Scotland, yesterday dismissed mounting talk of a fresh round of consolidation in the banking sector and squashed rumours of a merger with the Halifax.

He said prospects for further banking mergers were receding because of high valuations and new accounting rules on the treatment of goodwill.

"The new rules are very negative for banks taking over other banks. So I don't see much prospect for consolidation in the sector in the coming year," he said.

Asked about the Halifax, Mr Mathewson added: "Halifax is a legacy business – it is what it is going to be. It does not fit very well with what we do. We are a fast-moving, innovative business with a range of different businesses and if we merged with them, where would the growth come from?"

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New retail ventures, including partnerships with Tesco and Virgin, made a loss of £52m due to start-up costs. This was offset by the sale of part of a stake in Banco Santander, the Spanish bank, for £57m. Its US subsidiary, Citizens, saw profits rise by 31 per cent to £247m.

Reed surprises City with profits warning

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

REED ELSEVIER, the Anglo-Dutch publishing group, yesterday surprised investors with a warning that its profits were likely to fall 6 per cent in the year to December.

Shares in Reed International, the group's UK-listed holding company, dropped 10.5p to 443p as Reed Elsevier forecast that pre-tax profits for the year were likely to be £770m – lower than the expected £800m.

Reed blamed the shortfall on lower sales as a result of the Asian crisis and higher spending on its electronic publishing businesses. "We had already

signalled a weakness in the economy and an increased investment in our cost base," said Mark Armour, Reed finance director. "Over the past two months the economic situation has deteriorated."

He said greater competition in the US was squeezing Lexis-Nexis, its online legal and business database supplier.

Analysts responded to the news by slashing their profit forecasts for 1999 from about £845m to £800m.

Louise Barton of Henderson Crosthwaite said: "We knew profits would be down. It's the scale of the downturn that's the surprise."



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Even Goldman turns cool on world equities

BONDS WILL outperform equities over the coming year as stagnating world economic growth knocks corporate profits, Goldman Sachs, the leading US investment bank, predicted yesterday.

Speaking at the bank's annual assessment of global prospects, even Abby Cohen, Goldman's notorious stock market bull, sounded a cautious note about equities.

Ms Cohen, who doggedly stuck to her upbeat 1998 forecasts for US stocks despite the recent turmoil, said she was not as "exuberantly bullish" as she had been in the past.

She said: "For most of the last year the [US stock] market has been roughly at fair value. [US] stock prices can rise in 1999, but at a more normal rate."

According to Ms Cohen, the resilient nature of the US economy means that US corporate profits will continue to rise next year, despite the difficulties in the global economy.

She said: "The analogy for the US economy is a super-tanker. It may not be the fastest-moving, but it is among the steadiest."

Gavin Davies of Goldman's, a highly-rated City economist with close links to the Labour Party, also warned that the remarkable rise in global stock markets in recent years was not

BY LEA PATERSON

sustainable. He said: "We are not going to get double-digit equity returns [in 1999]. If we do, we will start worrying about a bubble. If we see returns like in recent years, this will qualify as a major overshooting."

GOLDMAN SAYS...

- World growth to stagnate
- US and UK to slow, Asia to recover
- Global bond returns to exceed global equity returns
- UK stock market to move sideways
- Interest rates to fall further

Mr Davies believes global equity returns will be around 5 per cent next year, while bond returns are likely to lie between 6 and 7 per cent.

Goldman's views are in line with many leading investment houses, where there is a widespread belief that the bond market now offers good value.

Also, as with many City forecasters, Goldman Sachs is gloomy about UK economic prospects. Little growth is expected in the UK stock market next year, and the UK economy is predicted to grow at just 0.5 per cent, significantly less than Treasury and Bank of England forecasts.

According to David Walton, chief UK economist, UK market analysts have been far too optimistic about the outlook for corporate earnings.

He said: "Analysts' earnings expectations are much too high at over 10 per cent. An outturn of zero is about the maximum likely. The UK equity market is forecast to trade sideways."

Mr Davies said this over-optimism about corporate profits was not confined to the UK, and predicted that growth in the OECD countries would slow from 2.2 per cent this year to 1.6 per cent in 1999.

World growth is forecast to remain unchanged at 1.8 per cent, largely because of recovery in much of Asia.

A devaluation of the Chinese currency or a drying up of credit lines to borrowers in Latin America or Central Europe represent the two biggest downside risks to the central forecasts, says the bank.

There are few global inflationary pressures, Mr Davies



Abby Cohen says US stock prices can climb in 1999, but 'at a more normal rate'

said, and there is even a risk of deflation - that is, falling prices - if central banks fail to respond appropriately to slowing growth.

This low inflation environment favours bonds, and Goldman Sachs predicts that bond yields will fall even further during 1999. Mr Davies said: "Our models do not indicate that a bubble has appeared in bonds. Bond yields could drop another 40 to 50 basis points."

On a sectoral basis, Goldman Sachs favours services and technology-based consumer and capital goods - media,

telecommunications and information services number among the bank's favoured sectors.

Consolidation could produce "extraordinary gains" in financial stocks, while energy stocks are unlikely to do well, the bank said.

Depositors rage at \$1bn BCCI closure

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

THE COST of winding up BCCI, the corrupt bank closed by regulators in 1991, is eventually set to break \$1bn, with fees paid to British accountants and lawyers totalling \$330m by 15 October, creditors heard yesterday.

More than 250 depositors of BCCI, owed a total of \$2bn by the bank, held the annual meeting of their BCCI Depositors' Protection Association (DPA) in London yesterday.

Having flown in mainly from the Middle East and Far East, the depositors heard that the global cost of liquidating the bank had already passed \$750m.

"The costs are enormous," said Keith Vaz, MP for Leicester East, who has acted as co-ordinator for the campaign for BCCI's victims since its collapse. "We need to question the rates charged by those handling the liquidation. It has been going on for eight years and could go on for another eight."

The meeting's anger was mainly directed at the Bank of England, which provided BCCI with a banking licence in the 1980s and then helped close it down with other banking regulators in 1991.

The liquidator Deloitte & Touche, depositors and MPs argued that the Bank of England should either make a settlement over its part in regulating BCCI or publish its own internal records to prove its innocence.

Adil Elias, chairman of the DPA, said that although 46 per cent of BCCI's \$12bn losses had been repaid by the liquidators, depositors still faced heavy losses, and the Bank of England was partly responsible.

Mr Elias said that "if there is ever to be liability on a public official for abuse of office in this country, then the Bank of England will be held liable either by the courts here or in Europe."

The liquidators are preparing a legal claim for £600m against the Bank of England. Yesterday's meeting unanimously agreed that the Government should release the previously unpublished parts of the Bingham report into the collapse of BCCI, in order to establish the Bank's responsibility. The Bingham report was published in 1991 but its lengthy appendices were kept secret.

Mr Vaz asked Alistair Darling when he was appointed chief secretary to the Treasury on Labour's election last year, to read the appendices and decide whether they should be published. Mr Darling did so and decided against publication.

Mr Vaz is tabling three motions in the Commons today, one urging full publication of the Bingham report, another recommending another meeting of all BCCI's remaining creditors, who last met five years ago, and a third motion concerning the treatment of funds held by the liquidators on behalf of creditors.

Earnings slump knocks LIG shares

SHARES IN London International Group, makers of Durex condoms and Marigold gloves, slumped yesterday as the company announced a fall in first-half earnings and issued a profits warning.

The City had expected lower earnings owing to the launch of Durex in the US, but the slump in sales of medical gloves came as a surprise. The share price

BY SIMON DUKE

plunged by 31 per cent to 130p.

The group reported a 14 per cent drop in half-year pre-tax profits to £7.9m and said that "full-year profits are unlikely to match those achieved in 1997/98". After a £15m restructuring charge, LIG posted a first-half loss of £9.8m.

Nick Hodges, chief execu-

tive, said the figures "reflected the impact of the US launch of Durex condoms and the transition of our examination glove business towards the manufacture of a premium range".

The group has been hit by an unexpected fall in sales of its standard medical gloves, which it had hoped to maintain at a high level as it makes the transition to making high-margin

polymer-coated gloves. Mr Hodges said: "We were hoping to sell more standard gloves while we were moving into that sector, but the market is in a very difficult situation of over-capacity and falling prices." He also cited cheaper Asian imports.

Condom sales fell, with US sales down by 10 per cent owing to a rebranding programme.

LIG, which has a plant in Malaysia, was also hit by the collapse of the ringgit. It was forced to cancel a forward exchange-rate hedge, incurring an exceptional loss of £2m.

Analysts were surprised the company had not mentioned the sales slump at a briefing last month. Michael King of SG Securities cut his full-year profit forecasts from £45m to £38m.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
AIT Group (I)	8.43m (6.71m)	1.262m (0.958m)	4.17p (3.33p)	0.83p (-)	-	14.12.98
Abbeycroft (I)	26.07m (25.18m)	0.608m (0.308m)	1.80p (0.90p)	1.60p (1.50p)	-	14.12.98
Airspring Furniture (I)	40.7m (41.68m)	-6.12m (1.51m)	-25.80p (4.44p)	1.95p (1.50p)	-	04.01.99
Aerotech International (I)	1.25m (0.98m)	-0.275m (0.233m)	-1.40p (1.40p)	-	-	-
Avon Rubber (I)	257.1m (250.8m)	23.11m (20.3m)	59.84p (47.30p)	22.80p (1.15p)	-	21.12.98
Banc (I)	4.69m (5.25m)	834m (477m)	78.30p (28.20p)	30.90p (7.50p)	-	14.12.98
Border Television (I)	9.46m (7.8m)	0.180m (0.62m)	1.10p (3.20p)	2.70p (7.70p)	-	08.03.99
Cadings (I)	32.88m (30.75m)	5.73m (4.71m)	9.18p (7.58p)	2.02p (1.66p)	-	21.12.98
CCM Distribution (I)	22.37m (22.53m)	1.35m (1.93m)	0.56p (0.82p)	-	-	-
Dea Valley Group (I)	10.28m (9.51m)	4.85m (4.66m)	25.40p (24.40p)	7.20p (6.50p)	-	14.12.98
Deasy (I)	35.39m (36.48m)	6.91m (6.84m)	14.0p (13.90p)	4.90p (4.55p)	-	14.12.98
Devaland (I)	18.22m (16.98m)	1.64m (1.2m)	10.42p (7.27p)	3.15p (2.88p)	-	11.01.99
Expro International Group (I)	76.1m (61.82m)	10.11m (10.03m)	11.10p (11.70p)	3.40p (3.05p)	-	29.12.98
General Electric Company (I)	3.352m (3.075m)	1.392m (1.15m)	11.40p (10.80p)	4.20p (3.91p)	-	15.02.99
Great Universal Stores (I)	2.353m (1.525m)	176.1m (251.1m)	13.70p (16.50p)	5.20p (8.00p)	-	04.01.99
Greenacre Group (I)	19.502m (14.68m)	58.2m (49.72m)	25.70p (22.40p)	5.65p (5.10p)	-	14.12.98
Harstone Group (I)	59.38m (86.65m)	4.51m (34.50m)	1.30p (10.90p)	-	-	-
Kalamazoo Computer Group (I)	32.02m (33.8m)	-0.590m (0.514m)	-1.14p (1.00p)	-	-	-
London International Group (I)	143.5m (155.6m)	-7.9m (9.2m)	-2.84p (1.65p)	0.90p (0.80p)	-	14.12.98
MS International (I)	15.25m (14.21m)	0.522m (0.200m)	1.20p (0.40p)	0.25p (0.10p)	-	29.12.98
Mid Kent Holdings (I)	22.83m (21.35m)	9.06m (9.37m)	44.50p (38.00p)	14.77p (13.30p)	-	08.03.99
Planck Holdings (I)	4.51m (2.94m)	0.729m (0.760m)	0.70p (0.10p)	-	-	-
Rapson Zorn Holdings (I)	9.15m (7.14m)	2.81m (1.44m)	12.40p (8.50p)	3.00p (5.00p)	-	04.01.99
Royal Bank of Scotland Group (I)	23.462m (20.5m)	1.007m (0.50m)	73.40p (55.40p)	24.60p (21.40p)	-	14.12.98
Suez Business Services (I)	6.304m (5.10m)	0.442m (0.430m)	0.130p (0.130p)	0.040p (0.030p)	-	14.12.98
Stakis (I)	359m (307m)	69.4m (54.0m)	7.38p (5.80p)	3.00p (2.50p)	-	08.03.99
Tandem Group (I)	17.596m (20.798m)	-1.012m (0.202m)	-1.11p (0.22p)	-	-	-
Videologic Group (I)	4.161m (5.457m)	-0.378m (2.938m)	-0.20p (1.30p)	-	-	-
Wren (I)	1.06m (1.29m)	3.17m (1.70m)	4.84p (3.61p)	1.00p (-)	-	14.12.98

(I) - First (I) - Interim (I) - Quarterly (I) - Split Period (I) - Nine Months (I) - Income

IN BRIEF

Marston plea to shareholders

MARSTON, Thompson & Evershed, the brewer under attack from its rival Wolverhampton & Dudley, yesterday urged shareholders to approve the disposal of its tenanted pubs at a meeting on 9 December. Marston suggested that Wolverhampton would not allow its bid to lapse if the vote went ahead, adding that the bid deserved to be debated over the full 60 days allowed by the timetable. A spokesman for Wolverhampton said the announcement smacked of "desperation".

Biotech code

BIOTECHNOLOGY companies are to publish a voluntary code of practice in a bid to rebuild investors' confidence in the beleaguered sector. The BioIndustry Association, the biotech trade body, yesterday pledged to publish a draft code by next month and a final code by next year.

Stakis focus

STAKIS, the hotels and casino group, wants to look at overseas opportunities, as the group's nearly exclusive focus on the UK could hold it back in years to come. The Glasgow-based company added yesterday that it would be looking at larger transactions. The group increased annual pre-tax profits before exceptional items by 33 per cent to £74.4m.

Drugs merger

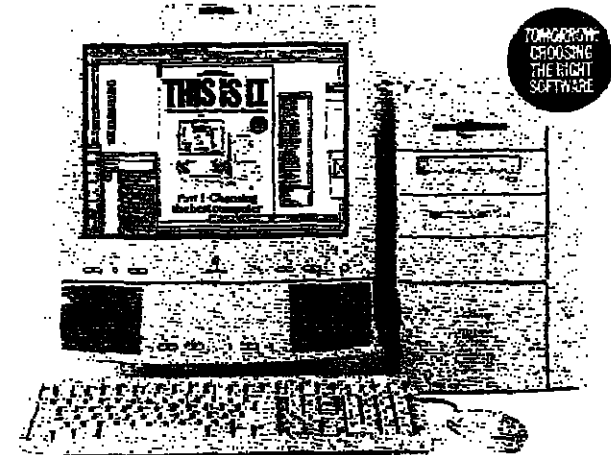
SYNTHELABO, majority owned by l'Oréal, confirmed its merger yesterday with Sanofi, controlled by energy group Elf Aquitaine, to form Europe's sixth-largest pharmaceutical company. The merger of Sanofi and Synthelabo, ranked second and third in the French drug sector, will produce a group with combined sales of Fr35bn. It will have three blockbuster drugs: Stilnox/Ambien for insomnia, Aprovel/Avapro for hypertension, and the Plavix anti-blood clotting agent.

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Interest rates for Midland Private Banking customers

With effect from 3 December 1998

	Gross %	Previous Gross %	Net %	Previous Net %
Private Banking Current Account (I)				
Up to £2,000	0.50	1.00	0.40	0.80
£2,000+	1.49	1.49	1.19	1.19
£10,000+	2.96	3.21	2.36	2.56
£50,000+	3.45	3.45	2.76	2.76
Private Banking Savings Account (I)				
(monthly interest option)				
Up to £10,000	5.61	6.08	4.48	4.86
£10,000+	5.80	6.27	4.64	5.01
£50,000+	5.89	6.37	4.71	5.09
£100,000+	6.18	6.65	4.94	5.32
Private Banking Savings Account (I)				
(annual interest option)				
Up to £10,000	5.75	6.25	4.80	5.00
£10,000+	5.95	6.45	4.76	5.16
£50,000+	6.05	6.55	4.84	5.24
£100,000+	6.35	6.85	5.08	5.48
Investment Management				
Cash held on the Capital Account within our Investment Management Service will earn interest at the following rates:				
	Gross %	Previous Gross %	Net %	Previous Net %
Up to £5,000	1.50	1.50	1.20	1.20
£5,000+	5.64	6.11	4.51	4.88
£10,000+	5.83	6.30	4.66	5.04
£50,000+	5.92	6.40	4.73	5.12
£100,000+	6.21	6.69	4.96	5.35

Gross: the rate before the deduction of tax applied to interest on savings. Net: the rate after the deduction of tax applicable to interest on savings accounts, currently 20%. Higher rate, tax-payers will have an additional 10%.

(I) This product is no longer available to new customers.

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Reed's own goal stuns the pundits

SURPRISE PROFIT warnings – the stock market equivalent of own goals – are becoming a bit of a habit. Yesterday it was Reed Elsevier's turn to kick the ball into its own net. The Anglo-Dutch giant's pre-Christmas present came a day after Arcadia, the fashion retailer, spectacularly wrong-footed the market. Reed blamed rising competition and tough Asian markets for the downturn, but analysts were left flummoxed by the extent of the earnings shortfall. They had a number of chats with the company in recent months and had not got the impression things were that bad.

"The scale of the downturn was larger than we thought," said one despairing analyst before moving to slash 1998 forecasts by around 6 per cent to £770m.

Reed's shares were suitably punished as brokers turned their surprise into sell orders. The spurned analysts' revenge left the stock 10.5p down at 443p. Arcadia, the owner of the Burton and Top Shop chain, continued to feel the pinch of Wednesday's shocker and lost 21p to 191.5p after Morgan Stanley downgraded.

MARKET REPORT



FRANCESCO GUERRERA

Footsie was restless, ending up 58.9 points at 5,566.1 after a volatile session. To mix sporting metaphors, the blue-chip index swung like an England tail-ender for most of the day. It went down by 118 in the morning as worries over Wall Street and a gloomy CBI survey dominated. But at lunchtime a raft of interest-rate cuts in the eurozone came to the rescue, fuelling hopes of a similar move by the Bank of England next week. The more optimistic dealers are even talking of another half-point drop.

The second-liners were much more consistent, remaining on a downward slope through the day. The medium cap finished down 47.8 at 4,756.6, while the small cap ended 15.4 lower at 2,021.4.

GECC led the blue-chips higher with a 12 per cent rise to 505p. The defence giant posted good profits and revealed that it is close to using its cash pile for a mega-deal with a rival: French groups Alcatel and Thomson-CSF are the market's favourites. The eternal tip, British Aerospace, up 22.5p to 500p, is also on the list.

Associated British Foods, annual meeting today, was boosted by speculative buying and digested a 47p rise to 589p without problems. Financials were in good form. Royal Bank of Scotland put on 7 per cent to 932p after pleasing analysts with a 32 per cent rise in profits. Schroders went against the grain and advised to switch to Bank of Scotland, up 35p to 675p. The rest of the pack was buoyed by interest rates hopes. Sun Life & Provincial, 35.5p higher to 528.5p and Allied Zurich, up 34p to 851p, were the pick of the insurers.

Alliance & Leicester, 38p higher at 885p and Abbey National, 37p stronger at 1185p, battled for the banks.

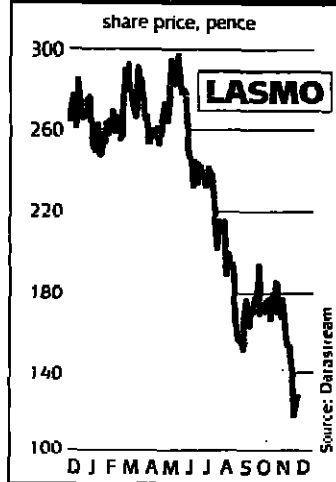
Among the Footsie losers, Railtrack was shunted into the sidings.

VITAL, a financial services specialist, made its debut on the junior Ofex yesterday after raising £225,000 through a placing and open offer. The Manchester firm has reversed into the British Taxpayers Self Assessment PLC (BASIS).

BASIC was an unsuccessful attempt to set up a company to help people with tax self-assessment forms. Vital, which handles the financial affairs of several Mancunian high-fliers, closed unchanged at 5p.

with a 73p loss to 1,589p after Merrill Lynch downgraded. British Airways nosedived 14p to 377p after reporting weak passenger yields. Retailers were on the cut-price shelves. GUS started the sale: slow growth at the Argos stores and its

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



mail order catalogue pushed the stock down 25p to 549p. A set of dire retail numbers from the CBI compounded the retailers' plight. Tesco headed the Footsie fallers with an 8p plunge to 166p. Kingfisher, a recent stalwart, dropped 18.5p to 526.5p, while Next was not looking smart after a 17p fall to 427p.

The market turned to sex but found little solace. London In-

ternational, maker of Durex condoms, flagged over 30 per cent to 130.5p – the year's low – after warning of a slowdown in its plastic gloves business. Full-year forecasts were chopped by £7m to around

FAREWELL TO LASMO, the publisher of an internet car magazine. The company has appointed receivers and yesterday ceased trading on Ofex.

Netica hoped to create an on-line market for used cars by pooling the stocks of 600 dealers on its www.autolocate.co.uk site. However, it ran into trouble when a major media company did not exercise its option to buy into the company. Netica bowed out at 80.5p.

£40m. Flextech did better: the broadcaster hardened 16.5p to 619p after selling its stake in Playboy TV. Two hotels groups found favour. Bass, the brewer which also owns the Inter-continental Hotels chain, reported good results and sounded

upbeat. The shares rose 17p to 830p. Stakis said London is booming and checked in a 4p rise to 111p.

But no mid-capper could better Coats Viyella. The struggling textile group put on over 7 per cent to 24p after revealing plans to sell its precision engineering division. Lasmo vied for FTSE 250 top spot but was held to second place: the ailing oil explorer rose 7.5p to 127p on talk of a forthcoming bid. English China Clays, the minerals and chemicals group, moulded a 5.1 per cent rise to 184p after a positive meeting with analysts.

Norcross advanced 3.5p to 57p. The building materials group is said to be being stalked by John Mansfield, loser in the battle for Marley. An offer of 80p a share could be on the cards. City Site, a Scottish property company, soared 2p to 32.5p after saying that the contractor Miller is talking about a 35p-a-share offer.

Masterhead Insurance was up 8.5p to 115.5p after being bought by rival Lloyd's vehicle Wren for £49m.

SEAG VOLUME: 908.5 million
SEAG TRADES: 65,054
GILT INDEX: 114.23 -0.01

Investment: Shift of focus in hotels and pubs pushes earnings up 75% to £834m

Bass profits rise brings back the fizz

BASS PROVIDED the beleaguered brewing and leisure sector with some welcome relief yesterday when it reported a 35 per cent rise in profits at its new Inter-continental Hotels division. The group also said there had been some recovery in its pubs and brewing business following a poor summer.

Including £173m of exceptional items, pre-tax profits in the full year increased from £477m to £834m. Bass said that hotel demand in the UK was softening but remained strong in the US and continental Europe.

Like-for-like sales in its pubs and beer business are showing year-on-year declines in current trading, but the performance of its key managed pub brands such as O'Neill's and All Bar One is encouraging, the company said.

It has been a year of major corporate activity for Bass, during which it acquired Inter-continental Hotels for £1.8bn in March and sold businesses worth £1.3bn, including Gala bingo, its betting busi-

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

ness and 300 smaller, managed pubs.

Under Sir Ian Prosser, the group's chairman, Bass is gradually shifting the focus of the business. First, it is becoming more international, with 30 per cent of profits now coming from outside the UK following the Inter-continental Hotels deal.

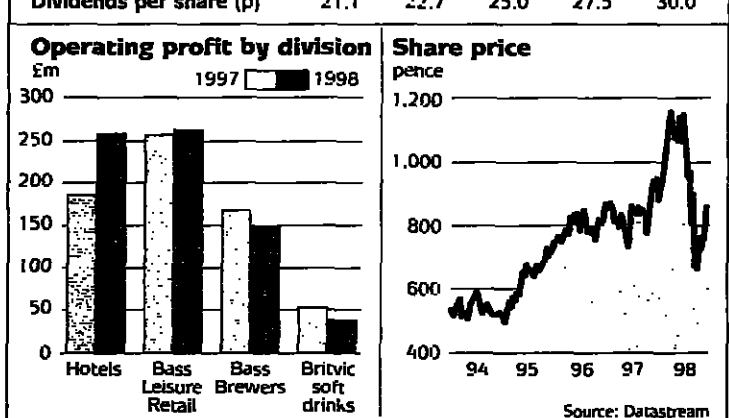
Second, the growing hotels business now accounts for 34 per cent of operating profit compared to 23 per cent last year, and other acquisitions are planned in distressed markets in Asia.

Third, the focus of the pub estate is being shifted towards branded, managed pubs in the more resilient South-east of England.

Bass's 655 branded pubs, which include Bar Coast and It's a Scream, account for a quarter of the group's 2,850-strong pub estate but 40 per cent of its sales. They take an average of £16,000 a week, which

BASS: AT A GLANCE

Trading record	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Turnover (£bn)	4.4	4.4	4.5	5.2	4.6
Pre-tax profits (£m)	552	599	671	477	834
Earnings per share (p)	40.1	43.4	50.4	28.2	78.3
Dividends per share (p)	21.1	22.7	25.0	27.5	30.0



is double the portfolio's average. The top brands continue to out-perform, with underlying sales rising by 4.4 per cent in the Harvester outlets and 3.9 per cent in All Bar One, compared to the 2.7 per cent rise across the group's pub estate.

The 108 O'Neill's pubs are being shifted away from the Irish theme as that trend starts to wane. The pubs are now being changed into "party pubs", with a further eight of these planned.

The new favourite is the Edwards bars, which change character through the day from coffee and croissant café bar in the early

Coats Viyella may sell division

BY SIMON DUKE

COATS VIYELLA, the clothing and textiles manufacturer, yesterday announced that it was in talks to offload its precision engineering division.

The company said that since deferring the demerger of the Viyella business, the group has received several approaches for its precision engineering division, and discussions are in their early stages with a number of potential buyers.

The strength of sterling has eroded the company's competitiveness. It posted a loss of £30m for the six months to June, compared with profits of £24m the previous year.

A demerger of Coats and Viyella, with Coats planning to retain the precision engineering unit and eventually float it, was announced earlier in the year but was postponed in September due to market turmoil.

Kazia Kantor, group finance director, said: "The credibility of the interested parties and the size of their financial resources means a sale will exceed the value that a demerger could yield for our shareholders."

The decision to sell rather than float has intrigued analysts, and has led to speculation that a large financial institution or international player has come to the table.

Any bid would have to be significantly above market value, since a sale would see Coats incur a £50m withholding tax charge in the US.

Analysts are negative about the company, whose poor management has presided over a fall from the FTSE 100, and a 90 per cent drop in market value over the past four years.

However, one analyst maintained that at 24p per share, a 9 per cent rise on the day, it did have latent value. "The precision engineering division is its best business, and worth roughly £200m. With the market capitalisation currently at £165m, the break up value must be at least 50p per share."

'Stigma' case is Cherie's chance to shine

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS
BY JOHN WILLCOCK

CHERIE BOOTH, wife of Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, launched the most important court battle of her barrister's career this week on behalf of 950 former employees of BCCI.

The landmark case centres on the employees' claim that they now carry the stigma of once having worked for BCCI, which was steeped in fraud, and as a result nobody wants to employ them.

The "stigma" claim is in turn a reaction to a claim brought by the liquidators of BCCI, Deloitte & Touche, who want the former employees to pay back the loans and mortgages they took out when they worked for BCCI.

The stakes are high. If the employees win, they're set to get a chunk of the £536m the liquidators have set aside against the possibility of a "stigma" victory.

And if Cherie Booth wins, her place in legal history will be assured. Next step the Woolfsack?

STEVEN NORRIS, the former transport minister who already juggles his jobs as head of the Road Haulage Association and of the road-pricing think-tank CMTE with his candidacy for Mayor of London, has added another title to his collection.

Mr Norris, who made a £600,000 profit from the sale of bus operator Capital City to FirstGroup this year, has invested in a stake in Integrated Transport Information Services (Itis). Mr Norris also becomes a director.

IT MUST be nice to have \$500m (£300m) stuffed in your back pocket. Ghaith Pharaon is a global property billionaire who was closely associated with BCCI before it went down. The courts in the Cayman Islands, one of BCCI's bases, recently made a \$2.1bn ruling against Mr Pharaon, saying this is the amount he should repay to BCCI's creditors.

Yesterday Mr Pharaon, who now lives in the Saudi port of Jeddah, made an offer through his UK barrister Julian Humphrey to Keith Vaz MP, who represents the UK creditors. Mr Pharaon offered \$500m to settle all claims against him. Mr Vaz says he has "passed the message on".

FURTHER EVIDENCE of Mr Pharaon's wealth is offered by his son Laith Pharaon, who runs a powerboat racing team, a not in-expensive pursuit.

Last year Mr Pharaon Junior won the world championship with a team called "Zero Defect". The year before he won in a boat called The Jolly Motor. This year he competed in a boat called Biba, but lost to a team called "The Spirit of Norway".

MICK JONES, who resigned as managing director of Business Post Group in the summer, has popped up as chief executive of Amtrak, the Bristol-based parcel delivery company, in an institution-led buyout worth £86m. Amtrak was founded in 1987 by Roger Baines and his wife Elaine, and since then they built it into a 330-franchise business using about 1,000 vehicles.

Graphics chip boosts Videologic

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

VIDEOLAGIC, the computer chip designer, is confident that it will be able to license its new graphics chip to several personal computer manufacturers early next year.

The company is in talks with about 15 PC manufacturers about its PowerVR2 Series chip, which can deliver two-dimensional and three-dimensional graphics, making it especially useful for playing computer games.

No agreements have been signed yet, but analysts expect Videologic to clinch several deals early next year. NEC, the Japanese group that manufactures the chips for Videologic, is preparing volume production in the first quarter of next year.

A deal with a large PC manufacturer would mark another step in the rehabilitation of Videologic, which has consistently disappointed investors in recent years despite being one of the UK's few truly high-tech companies.

Earlier this year Sega, the Japanese electronics giant, selected Videologic's chip for its new Dreamcast games console.

The device, which is set to replace Sony's Playstation in the affections of computer game freaks, is currently selling at a rate of 150,000 a week – even though it has yet to launch in Europe and the United States.

Revenues from the contract helped Videologic reduce its pre-tax loss to £378,000 in the six months to September, compared to a £2.9m loss in the same period of last year. Brokers now forecast a profit of more than £3m for the full year.

"We have got our ducks much better lined up than we have in the past," said Geoff Shingles, Videologic's chairman, adding that the company had also dramatically reduced its cost base.

Although the company is keen to attract PC manufacturers, it points out that the revenue stream is essentially short term because suppliers have to compete every time a new model is introduced – usually two or three-times a year.

Videologic is therefore also hoping to have its chips included in television set-top boxes.

"In the future all home entertainment is going to be centralised on that one box in your living room," said Patrick Yau, an analyst at Nomura, the Japanese bank.

A reliable profits stream would allow institutional investors to take Videologic seriously again. However, analysts warned that the shares, which rose 2p to 52.5p yesterday, are still not particularly cheap.

"For the current year the shares are pretty fully valued, although you can make a longer-term case for them," said Mr Yau.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Sterling Spot	1 month	3 month	D-Mark Spot	1 month	3 month
UK	1.0000			0.5987	0.6003	0.6018
Australia	2.6669	2.6692	2.6692	1.5958	1.6002	1.6020
Austria	19.598	19.572	19.572	1.7554	1.7554	1.7554
Belgium	37.482	37.494	37.501	34.460	34.394	34.310
Canada	2.5274	2.5256	2.5240	1.5337	1.5337	1.5337
Denmark	10.592	10.574	10.575	6.3430	6.3475	6.3335
ECU	1.4195	1.4159	1.4087	1.1747	1.1765	1.1797
Finland	8.4684	8.4442	8.4400	5.0785	5.0692	5.0549
France	9.341	9.314	9.265	5.6020	5.5911	5.5799
Germany	2.7859	2.7780	2.7638	1.6707	1.6677	1.6631
Greece	496.43	470.75	473.47	280.92	282.29	284.92
Hong Kong	12.917	12.908	12.888	7.7558	7.7558	7.7558
Ireland	1.1215	1.1186	1.1124	1.4869	1.4899	1.4930
Italy	275.09	275.15	275.17	1.6545	1.6518	1.6471
Japan	198.13	197.01	194.98	118.82	117.33	117.10
Malaysia	6.3795	6.3516	6.3171	3.7900	3.7870	3.7840
Mexico	16.679			10.0000		
Netherlands	3.1397	3.1307	3.1151	1.8829	1.8794	1.8745
New Zealand	3.1795	3.1776	3.1714	0.5245	0.5245	0.5245
Norway	12.376	12.360	12.340	7.4220	7.4003	7.4798
Portugal	285.65	284.84	283.40	171.31	170.99	170.54
Saudi Arabia	6.2545	6.2508	6.2454	3.7508	3.7525	3.7568
Singapore	6.3897	6.3848	6.3747	1.6450	1.6403	1.6327
South Africa	9.5298	9.5200	9.5150	5.7150	5.7150	5.7150
Spain	237.04	236.37	235.15	142.75	141.90	141.57
Sweden	13.352	13.355	13.288	8.0310	8.0174	7.9963
Switzerland	2.2733	2.2651	2.2463	1.3645	1.3598	1.3518
US	1.6675			1.0000		

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6675	1.0000	Iran	0.6419	0.3850
Brazil	2.0045	1.2021	Pakistan	83.125	49.850
China	13.803	8.2779	Philippines	64.366	38.600
Czech Rep	50.425	30.240	Poland	3.7779	3.4650
India	1.1215	8.4147	Qatar	6.0688	3.6395
Korea	364.83	218.79	Russia	33241.6	19935.0
Hungary	70.952	42.550	Taiwan	204.53	1225.50
Indonesia	12756.4	765.0	Thailand	54.034	32.398
Malawi	141.74	85.000	Turkey	505303	303030
Nigeria			UAE	6.1256	3.6795

INTEREST RATES

UK	6.75%	Germany	2.50%	US	7.75%	Japan	0.50%
Base	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount
Intervention	3.00%	Canada	4.50%	Denmark	4.50%	Belgium	2.75%
Italy	Prime	France	6.75%	Spain	4.00%	Central	3.30%
Discount	3.50%	Denmark	5.25%	Sweden	5.25%	Switzerland	1.00%
Netherlands	Discount	Denmark	4.00%	Repos/Acc	3.60%	Lombard	3.38%

BOND YIELDS

Country	3 mth	6 mth	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
Australia	4.45	-0.08	4.39	-0.02	4.43	-0.03	4.53
Canada	4.45	-0.04	4.74	-0.05	4.57	-0.09	4.79
Belgium	3.20	-0.36	3.23	-0.18	3.22	-0.12	3.52
France	3.60	-0.04	3.44	-0.02	3.17	-0.08	3.45
Germany	3.60	-0.04	3.44	-0.02	3.17	-0.08	3.45
Italy	3.60	-0.04	3.44	-0.02	3.17	-0.08	3.45
Japan	0.14	-0.01	0.22	-0.00	0.36	-0.02	0.73
Netherlands	3.45	-0.01	3.45	-0.02	3.27	-0.09	3.53
Spain	3.15	-0.05	3.20	-0.02	3.24	-0.12	3.52
Sweden	3.59	-0.05	3.51	-0.12	3.57	-0.09	4.30
Switzerland	1.65	-0.03	1.71	-0.04	1.85	-0.01	2.29
UK	6.17	-0.13	6.25	-0.07	5.08	-0.11	4.66
US	4.32	-0.20	4.34	-0.01	4.31	-0.01	4.57

MONEY MARKET RATES

Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer
6.40	6.30	6.27	6.17		

LIFFE FINANCIAL FUTURES

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est floor	Open
Long Gilt	Dec-98	117.41	117.78	117.40	11099.00
5 Yr Gilt	Mar-99	105.33			76.00
German Bund	Dec-98	114.55	114.56	114.55	51.00
Italian Bond	Dec-98	112.71	112.84	112.52	7367.00
Japan Govt Bd	Dec-98	136.93	136.98	136.98	3181.00
3 Mth Sterling	Dec-99	93.41	93.45	93.38	43095.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	94.52	94.54	94.36	25183.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	96.61	96.68	96.39	221692.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	96.79	96.81	96.66	5155.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	96.57	96.60	96.40	26081.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	96.88	96.91	96.76	9489.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	99.37	99.37	98.32	15334.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	98.47	98.52	98.32	47571.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	98.58	98.61	98.42	34469.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	98.48	98.52	98.37	58796.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-98	96.79	96.79	96.79	5932.00
FTSE 100	Dec-99	5585.00	5619.00	5590.00	48040.00</

SPORT

Rugby Union: Phil de Glanville will try to build a platform for the defeat of South Africa at Twickenham tomorrow

Former captain's case for defence

PHIL DE GLANVILLE has recently adopted a philosophical approach to the bouquet and brickbat world of professional rugby, which seems entirely appropriate for a player suspected by his critics of coining the maxim: "I tackle, therefore I am." Six confusing, often exasperating years in the international arena might easily have left England's former captain questioning his own sanity, yet he has emerged from the labyrinth of self-doubt with his faculties, if not his Hollywood looks, wholly intact.

"In this game," he says, "you go high and you go low. The trick is to stay on an even keel."

Which is precisely where he intends to position the English back division when they confront Henry Honiball, Andre Snyman and the rest of the Springbok record hunters at Twickenham tomorrow. Throughout his career, De Glanville has been publicly belittled as pedestrian and one-dimensional, a mere manservant to the court of St. Jeremy of Guscott, a commoner clad in Will Carling's ermine. No matter that he was, and is, the shrewdest of defensive organisers, the soundest of tacklers, the most effective of high-ball chasers. Some players, it seems, are born to play second fiddle.

Take a careful look at the statistics, though, and the real story emerges; one that demonstrates just how well De Glanville stacks up as an attacking midfielder. In the 21 Tests he has started since the autumn of 1993, England have scored 45 tries and conceded 33 - figures that compare favourably with the 33-35 ratio from the 23 games in total that ignores the unrepresentative southern hemisphere matches last summer in which he was not on the field from the outset. During his eight months as captain between November 1996 and the following July, his country's offensive forces caught fire as never before, running in 30 tries in the eight full internationals in which he participated.

In the pre-Clive Woodward era, however, England selection was all about perception rather than fact and De Glanville was sacrificed on the altar of expediency more times

CHRIS HEWETT

than he cares to remember. Jack Rowell should have picked him ahead of Guscott during the knockout stages of the 1995 World Cup but bottled out when the sheer scale of the heresy dawned on him. It was also patently obvious that De Glanville was in better shape than Carling during the 1996 Five Nations, yet Rowell again kept one eye on the potential discomforts of trial by inquisition and sidestepped the hard decision.

"Yes, I used to get very het up about it all, but I slowly came to realise that all the anger was doing me no good, least of all me," he said this week. "Perhaps it's my age, perhaps it's the fact that I have a baby son to care about now, but I've reached the stage where the ups and downs don't really affect me. I've seen it and heard it all so many times and I know that while I continue to play the game at this level, I'll see it and hear it all again. So yes, I think I'm completely philosophical about my rugby."

"I still find it mildly irritating that people should automatically pigeon-hole me as a defensive specialist and nothing else, but I can understand where they're coming from. I'm not foolish enough to pretend I'm much of a strike runner; my strengths lay in the unglamorous areas, the parts that don't catch the eye. But if you're going to break down these leading teams, someone has to pull opponents on to him and create some space for others to exploit. You do what you do to the best of your ability. End of story."

"It's the same with selection. You either get picked or you don't. Looking at the current England squad, it's pretty clear that apart from a tiny handful of certainties - Lawrence Dallaglio, Martin Johnson, Jerry - everyone is in there scrapping for a starting place. If you take my own inside centre position, it's obvious



Phil de Glanville is quick to recognise his place in the England set-up: 'My strengths lay in the unglamorous areas, the parts that don't catch the eye' Empics

that if Will Greenwood is fully fit and playing to his ability, he'll continue as first choice. That's fine. I'm no stranger to bench duty and anyway, Clive's communication skills are such that you always feel part of the set-up. He may not choose you, but he at least goes out of his way to give you a valid reason. No player can ask more of his coach."

Just as no coach could have asked more of a late replacement than De Glanville gave against the Wallabies last weekend; never one for the measured appraisal when a few superlatives are available, Woodward went from the common or garden

"outstanding" to the fully fledged "brilliant" via the merely "magnificent" to describe his stand-in's contribution. He was perfectly justified in singing De Glanville's praises, too. As the Springboks have proved over the 17 separate courses of their victorious banquet, defence is not only 50 per cent of the game, but the most important 50 per cent.

"They conceded a try a match in the last Tri-Nations tournament and that is a winning formula," agreed De Glanville. "Everyone has this fanciful image of the Springboks as an adventurous side, a running unit that constantly moves the ball

from one end of the threequarter line to the other. But the reality is that they kick the ball more than any other leading team in world rugby. They kick it from deep, force the opposition to turn and then hit them with the green wall. They are very, very patient - you can see that from the number of times they have come from behind to win close contests - and I have to say that had we followed their example last Saturday, we might well have beaten the Australians. We fell into the trap of running unpromising ball back at them instead of kicking it back. We were a little naive, I think. Of course it was

disappointing to lose in the way we did. We made a big statement against the Wallabies but we didn't actually win the game and we have to accept that until we tie up a victory over one of the southern hemisphere powers, we'll stay on the wrong side of a very fine, but very visible line. We are their equals in a number of areas, but not in the ones that really matter - belief, confidence, killer instinct. One win could make all the difference, though. Just one win."

If it happens tomorrow, De Glanville will not be slow in appreciating the irony of the occasion. For

only the second time - and, given Greenwood's current pre-eminence, possibly the last - he is about to start a home Test alongside Guscott, his midfield partner at Bath for the best part of a decade. Both have cost the other a full season's worth of international caps; thanks to Carling's longevity, the clubmates were cast as rivals at international level. But the sentimentalists in the Twickenham crowd, especially those from the western reaches of the M4, will wonder what might have been if De Glanville, the fetiched punts Guscott, the carrier, over the Springbok line for a historic winning try.

England tackle Boks head on

BY CHRIS HEWETT

THE SPRINGBOKS attempt a world record 18th successive Test victory tomorrow having conceded precisely that number of tries in the 15 months since the God-fearing Carle du Plessis relinquished coaching control to the apparently God-like Nick Mallett. Their defensive expertise is nothing short of astonishing - sometimes, you wonder whether there might be 18 South Africans on the pitch - and according to Lawrence Dallaglio, the England captain charged with restoring credibility to the wider European game as well as giving Clive Woodward the big-league breakthrough he craves, the Twickenham tackle count will be every bit as important as the try count.

"The Boks have certainly upped their defence since the Lions beat them and that improvement was the foundation stone of their recent Tri-Nations victory," said the Wasps flanker yesterday. "From a low base,

they have developed new levels of confidence, to the point that there seems an inevitability about their winning close games. If they beat us, I'm quite sure they will extend their record through the 20-Test mark. But that's a big 'if'. The record is a marvellous motivating factor for them, but we, too, are motivated."

Mallett, unbeaten in 16 Tests, saw his side concede three tries in each of the first two matches of his tenure. Since then, they have only twice shipped more than one to Australia in Perth in July and to New Zealand in Durban a month later. Indeed, they can legitimately claim that their 17-match sequence has more to commend it than the undefeated run compiled by Brian Loughrey's great All Black side of the 1960s. The New Zealanders played 11 of their matches on home soil while the Boks have secured 10 of

their victories on the road. Dallaglio agreed that the tourists' achievement in equalling the All Black landmark was "fantastic", but was even more positive about his own side's chances of success. "We should have beaten the Wallabies; indeed, had we played for the full 80 minutes, we would have," he said.

However, Dallaglio's Lions experience must tell him that England cannot hope to prevail unless they kick their goals as well as make their tackles. While the Boks went into last year's series without a specialist kicker and paid for their folly, the Lions flatly refused to walk on to the Test paddock without Neil Jenkins in their armoury. Sadly, England do not possess a Jenkins, or anyone remotely like him. What they do possess is Matt Dawson and it remains to be seen whether the Northampton scrum-half passes as a high-pressure marksman.

The man himself was gloriously

unperturbed yesterday by all the fuss surrounding his new and unexpected role. "I didn't realise until I opened the morning papers how massive a story it had become," he smiled, his tongue heading rapidly towards his cheek. "I really don't have a problem with it; in fact, I'm so relaxed about goal-kicking that if we had been given another kick at goal against the Wallabies last week, I would have told Mike Catt (whose fluffed conversion 10 minutes from time effectively cost England the game) that I was available if he felt he didn't want to take it."

"I don't see it as a burden. I shouldered the responsibility of captain, scrum-half and kicker at Test level back in the summer and I'm happy that anything around the 45-metre mark is within my range. What this switch has done is relieve some of the burden of Mike. He's been brought back in at stand-off and he can now concentrate solely on run-

ning the ball, which is what everyone seems to want from our No 10s."

For all that, Dawson is no more than an apprentice at this level and the Boks, pragmatic customers that they are, will use his inexperience as an excuse to infringe far more readily than might otherwise have been the case.

A couple of early misses will leave England uncomfortably wedged between a rock and a hard place, for it will be very difficult for them to go back to Catt following the events of the last few days. Andy Robinson, who coaches Catt at Bath, believes Woodward has got it wrong. "Mike has kicked well for us and I think the brave decision would have been to stick with him as kicker against the Boks," he said. "He's been criticised for missing one conversion, but England should not be blaming him for last weekend's defeat. They should be looking inwards at their own performance."

IRELAND WILL play their two internationals against Australia in Brisbane and Perth next year, the Australian Rugby Union has said.

The Irish will play the Wallabies in Brisbane on 12 June, with the return Test on the other side of the continent in Perth a week later.

Ireland will begin their six-match tour against Victoria in Melbourne on 29 May followed by matches against the Super 12 sides, Australian Capital Territory in Canberra on 1 June, New South Wales in Sydney on 5 June, and Queensland in Brisbane on 8 June.

Australia and Ireland are drawn in the same pool for next year's World Cup and will meet at Lansdowne Road in Dublin on 10 October.

The Spain flanker, Jose Diaz, has been suspended for eight weeks after being sent off in his side's 21-17 World Cup qualifying victory over Portugal at Murrayfield in Wednesday.

Diaz was shown a yellow card after 25 minutes for preventing Portugal taking a quick penalty, and then received his marching orders for telling the English referee, Steve Lander, what he thought of the decision. The ban was imposed by the match commissioner, Terry Vaux, and rules Diaz out of tomorrow's meeting with Scotland at the national stadium.

Spain won through to next year's World Cup thanks to their narrow win over Portugal - but it was the Portuguese who scored the only tries of the match, through Thierry Tetsch and Rohan Hofman.

Allan Bateman is set to return for his club, Richmond, in their Anglo-Welsh friendly against Cardiff at

the Madejski Stadium in Reading on 12 December.

Bateman is expected to make his first appearance for six and a half weeks after undergoing a shoulder operation which ruled him out of the Wales tests against South Africa and Argentina.

The 33-year-old Lions centre had played a seven times for the Allied Dunbar Premiership side before the long-standing injury which had dogged him for seven years flared up, causing him to miss three crucial club matches.

Bateman's return will be a boost for the Wales coach, Graham Henry, before this season's Five Nations Championship but the former rugby league man will have a fight to reclaim his place in the side.

His replacement, the Swansea centre Mark Taylor, produced two impressive displays in the narrow defeat to South Africa and against the Argentina, when he scored a try.

Murray bringing centre's eye to the wing

BY BRYN PALMER

CAMMY MURRAY may have vacated centre stage for the time being but he shows no signs of flinching his lines as he prepares for the latest role in his fledgling Scotland career tomorrow. The Hawick-born youngster will start on the right wing against Spain at Murrayfield as Jim Telfer's side look to further bolster confidence ahead of the Five Nations' Championship after last week's demolition of Portugal.

Although caps have only been awarded for five of them, it will be Murray's eighth international for Scotland in his third different posi-

tion after winning a Test centre berth on the summer tour of the southern hemisphere. Since returning from Australia, however, intense midfield competition with the likes of Jamie Mayer and Alan Tait in the Edinburgh Reivers and Scotland squads have helped Murray forge a new career on the wing.

Shaun Longstaff looked to have installed himself on the left flank last season after an impressive debut against Wales, but Murray got the nod for the first three of this year's

autumn internationals. And as he switches to the right to accommodate Kenny Logan's return to his favoured position against Spain, the 23-year-old paid tribute to the pair he has kept out of the side for their role in his own development. "I only changed to the wing with the Reivers at the start of this season and I am barely into double figures in terms of games there," he said.

"I am getting a lot of help from the guys in the squad who are used to playing there like Kenny and Shaun Longstaff. I am bringing a centre's eye to things but they have been

great in giving me the winger's perspective. It has helped my game enormously having them there to help me out on the defensive angles and coping with the different demands of the wing."

Murray admits he is happy to perform whatever role asked of him when it comes to pulling on the dark blue jersey. "How many people get the opportunity to play for their country? I just count myself one of the lucky ones," he added.

The Scotland backs coach, John Rutherford, believes an ability to adapt to the more expansive ap-

proach now favoured by the national coaches is a valuable asset in his young protégé's locker. "Outside the half-backs and inside centre, there is so much movement with the game we are trying to play that you want all your players to be comfortable whichever position they occupy outside them," he said.

"It is very important we have got wingers that understand that and it was pleasing to see Kenny and Cammy linking up well for one of the tries against Portugal. They are not flying machines but they are both physical, penetrative kind of players."

TOMORROW

GARY TEICHMANN
SOUTH AFRICA'S
CAPTAIN FANTASTIC
ON THE BRINK OF A
RUGBY RECORD

Italians put faith in home support

IN A COUNTRY where one can be a crowd, it is hoped that a capacity of 12,400 at the Fila Forum will inspire a home triumph against Sweden over the next three days in the first Davis Cup final ever to be held in Italy.

Were the visitors anyone other than Swedish, the notion of a victory for an intimidating crowd would seem feasible. But, as Jonas Bjorkman put it yesterday: "We have too much experience to let that happen. We're here to win. We are very positive about that."

Sweden, the holders, have won the Davis Cup six times and have been runners-up five times since 1975, when Bjorn Borg epitomised the unflappable Swedish

TENNIS
BY JOHN ROBERTS
in Milan

tennis player. Once, while playing at the Italian Open in Rome, Borg had coins thrown at him by rowdy spectators at the Foro Italico. Borg calmly picked up the money and put it in his pocket.

Although Italy share with Sweden and the Czech Republic the distinction of being the only ever-presenters in the 18 years of the World Group, the idea that Italy's journeymen would play in the final this year would have been derided in August.

Two things conspired in the

Italians' favour. Most importantly, Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi refused to play for the United States in the semi-final against Italy in Milwaukee. Then, having decided to stage the tie on an indoor carpet court to suit the pace of their game, the Americans laid one so slow that the Italians were able to trade groundstrokes as if they were at home.

Ironically, the Italians may have played into the Swedes' rackets in their choice of court surface for the final. Fearing the expertise of their opponents indoors, the Italians decided to put down clay. Two companies specialise in indoor clay courts, one Swedish, one French. Not wish-

ing to employ Swedes, the Italians sent for the French. The only problem is that the French court is much faster than the Swedish one, which rather defeats the object.

"I prefer to play indoors," Magnus Gustafsson, the Swedish No 1, said, "and when I got here I thought, 'this is my surface'. I will enjoy every second in there, I tell you."

The question of bonus payments surfaced as soon as the Italians qualified for the final, the dispute over lira between the players and the Italian Tennis Federation causing a lot of tut-tutting in the media. Where would Italian players be but for the Davis Cup, it was asked.

Nicola Pietrangeli, an icon of the Italian game who has lamented that he was born too early to share in the wealth of the professional era, was quoted as saying that the players "should give thanks to the Madonna for being in the final", adding that "they don't realise what an historical moment it is".

The situation was defused when the players and the Federation agreed to play first and talk later.

Play starts this afternoon, with Andrea Gaudenzi, Italy's No 1, ranked No 44 in the world, who recently had a shoulder operation, facing Magnus Norman, Sweden's No 2, ranked No 52 in the world. Davide San-

guinetti, the Italian No 2, ranked No 47, plays Gustafsson, whose age, 31, is the same as his world ranking.

"If we are one all after the first day, I think we will have a good chance," said Paolo Bertolucci, Italy's captain, who was a member of the team that won the trophy for the only time, in Chile in 1976.

Bertolucci, who played doubles in Santiago with Adriano Panatta, realises that a lot may hinge on tomorrow's rubber between Gaudenzi and Diego Nargiso and the well-grooved Swedish pair, Bjorkman and Nicklas Kulti.

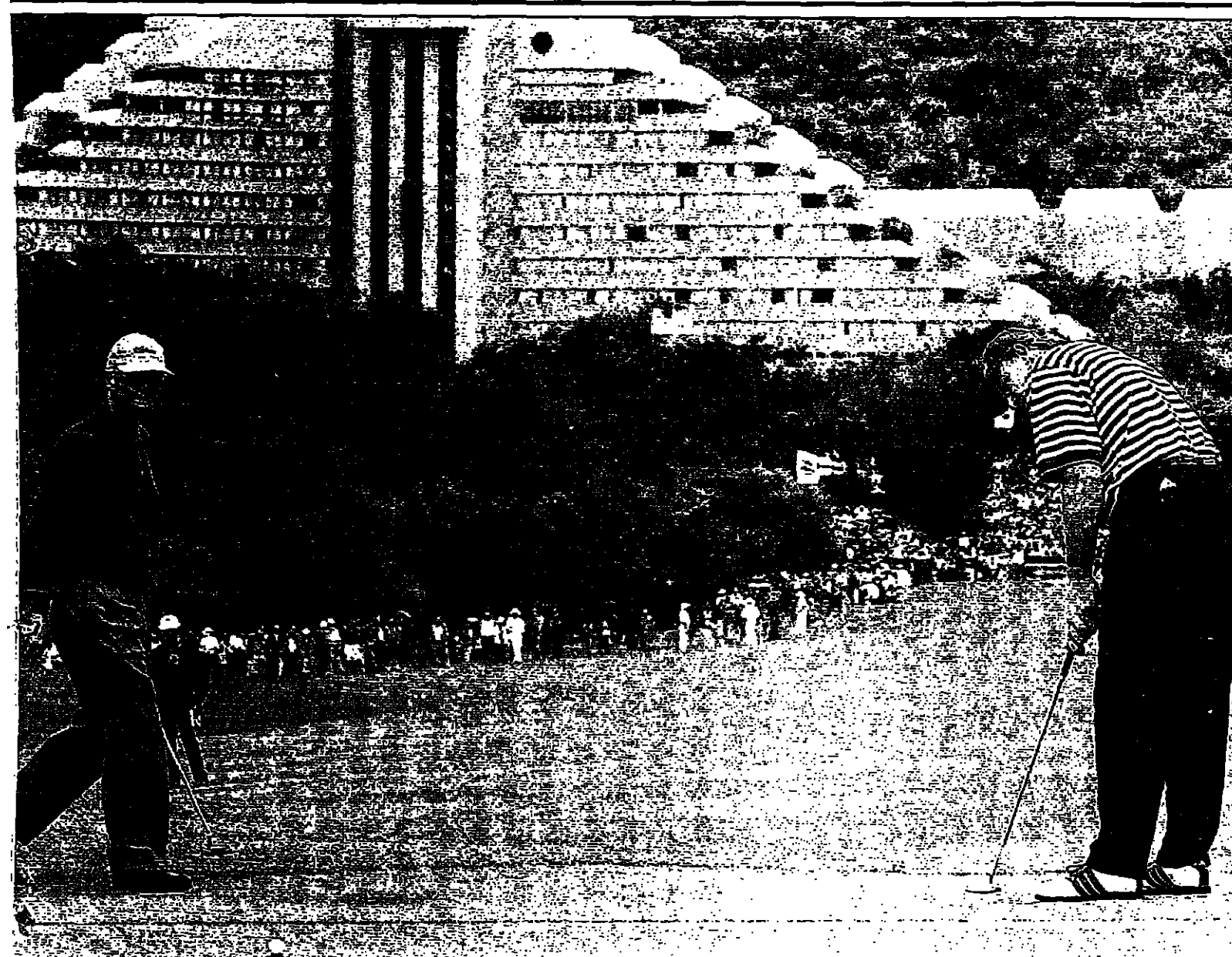
Nargiso is one of the game's eccentrics. The junior Wimble-

don champion in 1987, he later became so concerned about playing in the main event that he changed his tennis shoes five times. He then sent his mother to look for a sixth pair, telling her none of his shoes were good enough for the grass at Wimbledon.

Another time at Wimbledon, Nargiso became so frustrated that he aimed a serve at Mark Woodforde's head. The Australian was quick enough to dodge out of the way. During the French Open one year, Nargiso vented his anger on himself, repeatedly belting a leg with his racket. During the change-over, the wounded leg had to be bandaged.

A partisan crowd may steal the show here, but Italian teams have been embarrassed in the past. Watched by a handful of people while practising for their Inter-Zone final against the United States in Perth, Australia, in 1960 (Italy won 3-2), the Italian players were disturbed by hysterical laughter.

At first, they chose to ignore the noise, but the laughter grew louder. Finally the Italians complained. A club official asked them to show him where the noise was coming from, at which point the lookalikes sounded off again. **DAVIS CUP FINAL (Milan):** Today (11.30pm GMT), it names first: A Gaudenzi v M Norman, D Sanguineti v M Gustafsson. Tomorrow (2.30pm GMT): Gaudenzi and D Nargiso v Bjorkman and N Kulti. Sunday (1.30pm GMT): Gaudenzi v Gustafsson, Sanguineti v Norman.



South Africa's Ernie Els, watched by David Duval, makes a birdie putt on the opening hole in the first round at Sun City yesterday. AFP

Price takes two-stroke lead in hunt for jackpot

NICK PRICE, seeking his third million dollar (\$510,000) prize at Sun City, mastered the blustery conditions to lead the Million Dollar Challenge by two shots after the opening round yesterday.

Price's first-round 67 took him clear of the chasing trio of Mark O'Meara, Justin Leonard, and Bernhard Langer - all on three under par.

Leonard picked up four birdies over the last nine to charge up the leaderboard despite the windy conditions.

The South African Ernie Els made a fearsome start, racing to four-under par after nine holes in front of an appreciative home crowd, but then let a two-shot lead slip with a mistake-riddled back nine.

Scotland's Colin Montgomerie dropped a shot on the 18th and ended at one under, ahead of the Americans David Duval and Tom Watson, England's Lee Westwood and the pre-tournament favourite Tiger Woods.

Westwood, making his first appearance at the Million Dol-

GOLF
BY MICHAEL VLISMAS
at Sun City

lar, almost matched Els' start, hitting two birdies in the first three holes, but he then bogeyed the fifth and sixth.

Jesper Parnevik, three under after the first nine, had a disastrous run-in. He dropped a shot on the 15th and another on the 17th, before a double-bogey on the 18th saw him finish the day on two over.

Jim Furyk, finding the going tough in his first Million Dollar event, dropped two shots over the first six holes, and never really recovered, finishing on 75.

Price, last year's winner, was delighted with his performance, despite the wind. "It's amazing. I was telling Tom Watson today that this is a game for us here, because we normally have a light breeze here," said Price.

"But it certainly helped on the par fives, because we had two of them downwind. No 9

and No 15, so that evened things up a little bit," he added. The Zimbabwean put his success down to the recent acquisition of a driver.

"It has increased my launch angle by about two or three degrees and it's carrying further. At this altitude it hangs in the air longer. It really been an asset to me in the last three weeks," said Price, on a roll after winning the Zimbabwean Open in Harare last Sunday.

Woods, the world No 1, had an indifferent start to his first Million Dollar event, and had to settle for level par going into the clubhouse, having swung between two-over and two-under.

"The wind was going back and forth all day and you just had to make sure you timed it right and stayed committed to your shot," said Woods.

But the 22-year-old is pleased with his form. "It's not too bad," he said. "Obviously it's a little better than it was two months ago. I'm very pleased with the way I'm striking the ball, I'm starting to roll the ball again and

it feels like I'm starting to make progress. It feels pretty good."

On playing for a million dollar first prize, Woods said: "I never really think about the money. I always try to get the victory. Get enough victories and the money will come."

Afterwards, Woods praised Gary Player for his role in South Africa's transformation. "When Gary did all the things he did to fight for the end of apartheid, that was significant," said Woods, in the country for the first time.

"I know Gary went through a lot, and was heckled in tournaments he played in and had ice thrown at him. But he spoke out against apartheid. Me coming here after it's all been resolved is not as significant."

"But I've always wanted to play golf in South Africa because of the racial difficulties the country has had."

"It's nice to be here as a person of colour, and it's also nice to see the mixed race galleries as well," added the American. Scores, Digest, page 29

Positive step for Appleby

STUART APPLEBY, the Australian golfer who is trying to come to terms with the tragic death of his wife, controlled his emotions to lead the field after the first round of the Australian Open in Adelaide yesterday. Appleby, playing at his first home event since the loss of wife, Renay, earlier this year, fired a three-under 69 at the Royal Adelaide course.

The US-based Australian led by one shot from a group of five players headed by Greg Norman as only 13 golfers broke the par of 72.

Appleby's world fell apart last July when his wife of 19 months was crushed to death between two cars outside Waterloo Station in London. The 27-year-old Victorian tried frantically to bring her back to life by the roadside.

BY JULIAN LINDEN
in Adelaide

In a round that would have been universally hailed by his sympathetic peers, Appleby had six birdies and three bogeys.

Appleby has a different slant on life these days. He is still fragile emotionally and is taking things a step at a time as he rebuilds his life. "I have lived this nightmare for four months and it's not getting any easier," Appleby told a roomful of hushed reporters.

"I'm getting used to going to bed by myself, or waking up and not having her walk around, but it does not change the fact that I can't do without her."

Appleby realises nothing is constant, even down to his golf, which was on a rising plane after winning the Kemper

Open, his second career US Tour win, just before Renay's death. "I now find myself a bit more edgy, temperamental, one minute I'm good, one minute I'm bad, very up and down," he said. "I feel I can concentrate well at times but I'm not far away from having trouble, it's very hard to keep playing constantly. That's what I'm trying to do this week, not trying to expect too much and beat myself up and just be patient."

Norman made a successful return to the office, casting aside the cobwebs of eight months away from golf to make a rousing start to his first 72-hole tournament since shoulder surgery. He had six birdies, a double-bogey at the 544-yard ninth hole and two bogeys in his round of 70.

"I'm very happy with the day

considering it is my first competitive round since April," Norman said. "I felt pretty much in shape and hit a lot of good shots. I think it's going to be hard for anyone to go around this course without hitting two or three bogeys. I don't care how good you are hitting the ball. The course forces you to play defensively."

Nick Faldo and Fred Couples had wretched first rounds. Faldo returned 77, including six bogeys, while Couples was one under par after seven holes before slumping with four consecutive bogeys to finish on 76.

It was a good day for Justin Rose, who has not made the cut in eight attempts since turning professional following his fourth in last summer's Open Championship. He was well set after an opening 72. Scores, Digest, page 29

WIN AN EVENING WITH SOME OF YOUR SPORTING HEROES AND A TRIP TO THE SYDNEY 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES.

The Independent and the Australian Tourist Commission have teamed up to offer one lucky reader and a friend or partner the chance not only to dine with some of Britain's most famous sporting heroes at the Sports Writers Association Annual Dinner at the London Hilton on Monday 14th December, but also the opportunity to fly to Sydney and visit the 2000 Olympic Games.

The 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney are set to generate unprecedented levels of interest. More than anything, Australians are famous for their obsession with sport. The continent has established its reputation as a leading sporting nation and is host to some of the world's most prestigious sporting events. So there's never been a better time to head Down Under and discover what Australia has to offer. Sportsworld, the British Olympic Associations appointed tour operator, has provided the winner with six nights' accommodation in a twin room and two event tickets. Sportsworld has a comprehensive range of programmes from fully inclusive packages to flight and ticket options. Call Sportsworld for full package details.

Qantas Airways is providing two return tickets to Sydney. Travelling with Qantas, Australia's international airline, has always been an enjoyable experience. Now there is a new Qantas which offers even higher standards of relaxed and enjoyable travel for every passenger. Quite simply they have redesigned the way you fly with new levels of service and comfort in all three classes.

The Independent have selected 6 sporting personalities from those previously honoured over the past 50 years - all you have to do is vote for one of the athletes who in your opinion has contributed the most to their sport. Phone the number opposite the name listed below and tell us on the line the reason for your selection and leave your name, full address and a daytime telephone number. You could be the lucky winner who receives a pair of tickets to the Sports Writers Association Dinner and your trip to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

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Blaisdell puts the bite into Panthers

Nottingham's Canadian coach has managed to put their city on the ice hockey map. By Adam Szreter

THE NUMBER of men from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, who have made a mark on Nottingham's cultural heritage over the years is hard to quantify precisely, but in Mike Blaisdell, the 38-year-old coach of the Nottingham Panthers, the city knows it has at least one who is determined to blaze a trail.

Blaisdell, a veteran of nine seasons in the National Hockey League with Detroit, Pittsburgh, the Toronto Maple Leafs and the New York Rangers, is acknowledged as one of the most astute and inspirational coaches operating in the British Super League and tomorrow night at the Sheffield Arena he will be attempting, against the odds, to lead the Panthers to their third Benson and Hedges Cup triumph in five seasons.

Blaisdell took over as player-coach at Nottingham in 1992, after winning the championship as a player with Durham. After so much success, especially in this competition, he might be forgiven for taking it lightly this time around, but at last week's pre-final dinner in London, Blaisdell was having none of that. "It's important for any sporting club to have real success," he said. "Last year was devastating for us because we finished fourth in the league and didn't win a trophy. I'm nervous thinking about the final already."

"Sheffield is only 45 minutes away so our fans will be

coming in droves, the tickets just went and that's all people have been talking about. We've got two games in the Super League this weekend [they beat Newcastle and lost to Cardiff] but no one even mentions them. I don't even think most of our fans know where we're playing in the League - they're just thinking, 'Ayr, the Cup, December 5th'."

Blaisdell's own passion for ice hockey is as difficult to convey in printed words as the speed and excitement of the game itself. "There's so much to ice hockey," he said, "but you've got to go to a game to appreciate it. Get as close to the ice surface as possible and you'll get a new respect for it. You've got big, strong guys, turning on a dime, skating like figure-skaters and playing a very physical sport."

"There's skill involved, grace and there's vision - that's the thing. Everything happens so fast but it's that player who, out of the corner of his eye, spots a man open and puts it right on his stick. Then there are the big hits and the fights. The fights aren't bad for hockey because no one ever really gets hurt. If you're at a hockey game you can see why it gets to boiling point and they have to let off some steam - there's an intensity that's hard to duplicate."

Although the game in this country is still struggling to secure a place in the consciousness



Mike Blaisdell, the Nottingham Panthers coach, plans the strategy which he hopes will give his team their third Benson and Hedges Cup success in five seasons, when they play in tomorrow night's final against the Ayr Scottish Eagles in Sheffield

ness of the average sports fan, with the advent of the Super League, increased television coverage and sponsorship, Blaisdell believes it is on the right track. However, when it comes to the thorny issue of imported players ice hockey

Simon Hunt, Ayr will have none. "The sport has progressed since I've been here in that there's a higher level of talent on the ice," Blaisdell said, "but I feel it's hard for the British kids to get their foot in the door. There are some very good

get a chance, whereas there are imports that I don't feel do a better job than the British kids."

The other side of the coin is that British players like Hunt and Jonathan Weaver who have been given a chance are playing to a better standard.

Blaisdell's own playing days are numbered now, despite returning to the ice to help with the injury crisis that Nottingham have endured since their epic semi-final victory over Manchester. With only 13 players out of 20, and having lost the away leg 3-2, they went a further goal behind during the first period before winning 3-1.

The task tomorrow is an even harder one. The Ayr Scottish Eagles, hoping to become

the first side to retain the Benson and Hedges Cup, won all four domestic trophies last season and on Tuesday in Manchester came within a minute of becoming the first British side to qualify for the second round of the European Cup.

Blaisdell and his players, though, have their sights set. "They hand out these really stupid looking baseball caps to the winning team and I was talking to some of the guys and one of them said: 'I just want to wear that yellow, felt hat again. It's something that you'd never, ever wear again but you put it on, look stupid in front of 7,000 people, and it's great.'"

'The fights aren't bad because no one gets hurt. If you're at a game you can see why it gets to boiling point'

seems no clearer about its direction than football, rugby union or cricket. While Nottingham should, injury permitting, have one home-grown player in tomorrow's line-up in

British players but I don't see too many up-and-comers getting the opportunity to show what they can do. There's a thought process that says these guys have to be exceptional to

"It used to be that you'd get the puck and think 'OK, there's five British guys on the ice, I'm just going to score a goal.' That would never happen now. The Super League has isolated a se-

EXETER

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12.50 Whose Wonder 1.20 Walter's Destiny
1.50 Sad Mad Bad 2.25 Secret Bid 2.55 Musical Sling (nb) 3.30 Hark!
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Fraser has his back to the wall

FOR SOME players, especially those certain of their places, the State matches between Tests offers the chance of some decent match practice. For others though, the opportunity is a bit like a rope with two uses, and depending on how you fare, it can either be a lifeline to selection, or something to hang yourself by.

With 56 wickets from 13 Tests in 1998, few would doubt that Angus Fraser has earned his right to be England's leading bowler, and an automatic Test selection. Yet, dumped for the Perth Test in favour of the pacer Alex Tudor, Fraser finds himself having to impress his doubters, as he has several times before in his career.

Horses for courses is fine if we are talking thoroughbreds, but when you are closer to the donkey end of the spectrum, the rules are different. Instead of perhaps trundling a few overs against Victoria this weekend and keeping the joints oiled, Fraser is now under pressure to bowl flat out and take wickets. Like most bowlers, he is not a happy bunny.

"I know there are no guarantees and all that," Fraser said, "but when you've had the kind of year I've had, you feel you've earned the right not to have to be at 100 per cent in a State game. In an ideal world, you'd save yourself for the big matches."

Fraser is a trooper and a damned good one and you can see his point of view, and it will not be easy after nine months of non-stop intensive Test cricket to make something as relatively mundane as playing Victoria in an empty MCG, the highlight of your life.

To make matters worse, at least from a combative point of view, Victoria, as has been the habit of most English counties against visiting sides, are fielding a weakened side. With two Shield matches coming up after the England game, Victoria are resting their key players, a retinue that includes Shane Warne, Damien Fleming, Matthew Elliott, Paul Reifel and the promising David Saker.

A depleted side holds little allure for anyone, but while there is little doubt that Warne's presence would have created a frisson of excitement, you can

CRICKET
BY DEREK PRINGLE
in Melbourne

understand why, after years of psychological dominance over England, he is wary of exposing himself before time.

Since his operation, the Australian media have logged his every move and it is now a question of whether Warne or Christmas will come first.

Although the circumstances are different, Fraser like Warne, is also having to prove himself all over again.

"I feel I'm under pressure when I don't deserve to be," said Fraser, the old county pro in him speaking up. "The way I've been brought up at Middlesex is that not only are you competing against the opposition but to be the best bowler in the side as well."

"In Perth I felt delighted for Alex [Tudor], but because I wasn't playing, I felt a bit helpless too. You don't mind being outbowed, but when you aren't in the team, your destiny is not really your own."

There is also the danger, that by trying to impress - as Fraser surely must over the next few days - that a player deserts the method that has brought him to prominence, and in its place adopts madness. Experience, however, is on Fraser's side and he is unlikely to fall into that trap.

"You have to have faith and stick to what you do best. My strength is that I know my limitations. I'm not a Glenn McGrath or a Curtly Ambrose, much as I'd like to be. Although conditions haven't perhaps suited me yet on tour, I'm not about to do anything different."

If Fraser is fighting for a place in the next Test, he is at least fit enough to do so. Graham Thorpe has no such guarantee and the Surrey left-hander, back permitting, is playing for his right to remain on tour.

Unlike his captain, Alec Stewart, and the opening batsman Michael Atherton, who both need runs under their belts, Thorpe, presuming he will miss the one-dayers, must prove his back is robust enough for another month on the road.

As he and Fraser are concerned, it promises to be an interesting few days.



The paceman Angus Fraser is consoled by the England coach, David Lloyd, after being dropped for the second Test against Australia in Perth. Now he has to prove himself all over again.

Taylor's Canberra date with England

MARK TAYLOR, the Australian captain, will lead the Prime Minister's XI against England in their one-day tour match at Canberra's Manuka Oval on 17 December.

Taylor was yesterday chosen to captain the XI, which includes several Australian players with hopes of selection for the World Cup, in the traditional match against the tourists. It will be played two days after the scheduled finish of the third Test in Adelaide.

Ryan Campbell, the flamboyant wicketkeeper-batsman who hammered a brilliant 146

off 147 balls against England for Western Australia last month, is included, alongside his state colleagues Simon Katich and Matt Nicholson.

The Gloucestershire all-rounder, Andrew Symonds, who played his first one-day international for Australia in Pakistan last month, and Mark Harris, the South Australia left-arm pace bowler, are also included in the line-up.

PRIME MINISTER'S XI (v England, Canberra, 17 December): M A Taylor (NSW, capt), R J Campbell (WA), B W Carey (Queensland), L Hennes (ACT), M A Harris (SA), S J Hodge (Victoria), S M Katich (WA), D J Llewellyn (Queensland), M Nicholson (WA), C J Richards (NSW), A Symonds (Queensland).

Hair stands down to avoid controversy

DARRELL HAIR, the Australian umpire, has agreed not to officiate in any international matches involving Sri Lanka this season, averting fears of a dispute between the Australian and Sri Lankan cricket boards.

Denis Rogers, the chairman of the Australian Cricket Board said yesterday that Hair no longer wanted to be considered for matches involving Sri Lanka during next year's limited-overs series between Australia, Sri Lanka and England.

The issue had threatened to overshadow the series after Sri Lankan authorities com-

plained at Hair's criticism of their off-spinner, Muttiah Muralitharan. In a recently published book Hair described Muralitharan's bowling action as "diabolical" and said he would have no hesitation in balling him in the future.

The Sri Lankans called on the ACB to stand Hair down from their matches, but the ACB passed the matter on to the International Cricket Council, which is yet to make a decision. Hair said he made his decision to stand down after discussing the issue with other umpires.

"If anybody wants to buy them they will have to talk to us, not Rennes. They would be expensive even if we wanted to let them go, and we don't."

Houllier has been scouring Europe searching for defensive reinforcements. Liverpool are also still awaiting the international clearance from the Turkish FA that will allow another French defender, Jean-Michel Ferri, to complete his £1.7m move from Istanbulspor.

Steve McManaman has tried to quash speculation about his future by stressing his commitment to Liverpool. The England winger has been surrounded by talk of a big move abroad when his contract runs out at the end of the season. Real Madrid and Barcelona have both been linked with McManaman, who could earn a lucrative free transfer under the Bosman ruling.

But McManaman has insisted he wants to help bring

the England side to do well but we also want to win our own matches.

"Counties are bound to prepare pitches to suit their strengths because they want to win matches and if you have issues of promotion and relegation at stake the pressure to do so will be greater still."

"You need to have pitches prepared to certain standards of quality and the regulations need to be enforced. The present system of reporting pitches is not always adequate because by the second day the character of the wicket may have changed. You only have to look at last season, when there was only one instance of a county being docked points for a poor pitch. Perhaps the answer is to have independent pitch inspectors present on the first day."

There is a conflict between the interests of the Test sides and the counties and I don't think having two divisions will alter that. Everyone wants to

Kinnear denies bet irregularity

JOE KINNEAR, the Wimbledon manager, denied yesterday that any of his players had breached tough new Football Association rules on betting.

The FA has asked Wimbledon to explain "as a matter of urgency" a reported claim by Kinnear that his players had put bets on themselves at 66-1 to win the Worthington Cup.

Kinnear said: "It's an absolute joke and it's very sad indeed. When I said the lads had a few quid on us I was talking about friends of mine - not the players. I also said we took 66-1 about finding Lord Lucan - but I see that did not appear in any papers."

However, what did appear in the papers, in last night's London Evening Standard, was a column by Wimbledon's Jamaican international midfielder, Robbie Earle.

"We would really like to go on and win the competition," Earle wrote, "not just for ourselves but for Joe Kinnear, even though some of the lads had a flutter on us at 66-1." Who the "lads" were was not explained.

Wimbledon reached the last four of the Worthington Cup by beating Chelsea on Tuesday. Tightened regulations on betting in the game were drawn up by the FA last year which declared that no betting of any kind would be allowed. This fol-

FOOTBALL
BY MARK PIERSON

lowed a report by Sir John Smith in the wake of the collapse of the match-fixing case in which Bruce Grobbelaar, John Fashanu and Hans Segers were all cleared.

Following Sir John's report, the FA issued a blanket ban on all types of betting by players, managers and directors - even if it was on their team winning - as that could possibly lead to a financial temptation to try to influence the opposition.

The report had warned: "The rules have been widely disregarded and if they continue to be broken, it will be at the offender's peril. The new rule is clear - you should not bet."

Premier League chairman have set up a working party to examine the prospect of appointing full-time referees.

The chairman decided at their quarterly meeting in London that the concept should be further investigated before they would consider giving it more serious consideration.

They heard a presentation from the Premier League referees' officer, Philip Don, who will now work alongside representatives of three top-flight clubs to examine the pros and cons of the idea.

Silvestre deal under threat

GERARD HOULLIER's hopes of snapping up Internazionale's brilliant young French defender, Michael Silvestre, look doomed to failure.

The new Liverpool manager, who was in the French Under-20 squad he coached in 1997, and was hoping that he could take advantage of a dispute between the Italian club and Rennes, the French side.

Rennes have protested to football's world ruling body, Fifa, that Silvestre and his former club-mate Ousmane Dabo, who both left them under the Bosman ruling to join Inter in the summer, are still technically their players.

Houllier expects to hear the outcome of the Fifa verdict today. If Silvestre is deemed to still belong to Rennes, they will be happy to sell him for around £3m. However, a spokesman for Inter said: "I think Rennes are not living in the land of reality. Both players are very happy here."

"If anybody wants to buy them they will have to talk to us, not Rennes. They would be expensive even if we wanted to let them go, and we don't."

Houllier has been scouring Europe searching for defensive reinforcements. Liverpool are also still awaiting the international clearance from the Turkish FA that will allow another French defender, Jean-Michel Ferri, to complete his £1.7m move from Istanbulspor.

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BY TOMMY STANFORTH

the glory days back to Anfield. He said: "People keep linking me with clubs - but the position is that I am under contract to Liverpool."

"It is the only club I've ever played for and I am still hoping we can sort out a deal for when my contract expires at the end of the season. I want to emulate those players I watched as a kid - Phil Neal, Phil Thompson and Graeme Souness - and win medals. Then I want to win them again and again."

Vinnie Jones, the former Wimbledon and Wales captain, is considering a move to Birmingham, after being excluded from the first team at Queen's Park Rangers, where he was the assistant to the former manager Ray Harford.

Barcelona have signed a pre-contract with Fabio Capello to take over as the coach of the Catalan club next season, Spanish newspapers reported yesterday.

Capello, formerly in charge of Milan and Real Madrid, is reportedly being lined up to replace the current coach, Louis van Gaal, whose future has been jeopardised since the club were knocked out of the European Cup in the Champions' League stage for the second successive season.

South Africa have named Trott Moloto as their new national coach. The 42-year-old was the assistant to Philippe Troussier at the World Cup in France this year and has been the caretaker coach since the Frenchman's exit. Carlos Alberto Parreira, the former Brazil coach, turned down the job.

The former international referee Michael Zen-Ruffinen has taken over as the general secretary of Fifa. The 39-year-old Swiss national, who joined world football's governing body in 1986, succeeds his compatriot Sepp Blatter, who was elected Fifa president in June.

Everton set to stay at Goodison Park

EVERTON SEEM certain to abandon plans to move from Goodison Park to a new ground, as well as a proposal to appoint a new chief executive.

The new men in charge of the boardroom at the Merseyside club, the chairman, Sir Philip Carter, and his deputy, Bill Kenwright, have decided to put a low priority on both these controversial issues. Their aim is to make a bid for the shares, estimated at being worth £50m, owned by the former chairman Peter Johnson, and to get Everton back on an even keel before

considering two of Johnson's most far-reaching plans. Johnson faced considerable opposition from fans' organisations over his scheme to leave Goodison. Even his attempts to organise a poll of supporters, which he maintained gave him a mandate to go ahead with the scheme, was furiously opposed as unreliable.

The plans, too, for the appointment of a chief executive have been on hold for some time. Everton advertised the post many months ago, and held a couple of interviews.

Two divisions: The professionals' verdicts

THE ADMINISTRATOR
Jim Cumbes (Lancashire)



'Second tier teams will still attract sponsors'

"IT WAS time for a change and we are pleased with the decision. We hope it will lead to a raising of standards and we will have to wait and see if it achieves that. In any event, we were not getting anywhere with the existing format."

"The idea of conferences was put forward and rejected last year because no one could understand it, but a two-division arrangement is much more straightforward and easy to follow."

"Availability of players is going to be a problem because of the size of the international programme and clashes between Test and one-day internationals and county matches. But given time the competition will benefit."

"I don't believe there would be any benefit in going back to uncovered pitches alongside the new structure because players have to be tested in con-

ditions they will encounter in Test matches. But there is room for improvement in pitches overall."

"As for the commercial implications of the change, I feel that having two divisions can only improve the situation. With promotion and relegation issues at stake there will be more matches of consequence and therefore more media coverage, which will mean more exposure for potential sponsors."

"I don't think teams in the second tier will find it more difficult to attract sponsorship. In soccer, there is plenty of interest in the First Division and I think this will be the case in cricket. Playing in a division where 30 per cent of the teams will be promoted must have an advantage over an 18-team competition in which you might always be near the bottom."

Jim Cumbes is chief executive of Lancashire

THE PLAYER
David Millns (Leicestershire)



'We must develop quality of young players'

"I HAVE a mixed view. I can appreciate the arguments in favour of two divisions but I was happy with the current set-up and not only because we have come out on top twice in three seasons. There is no doubt it will stimulate interest in the game but standards will not necessarily improve. Already we are turning out England teams who can barely bat through a session and get out to one-day shots and there is a danger that two-division cricket will produce more players like that."

"It only needs for you to suffer a couple of wash-outs and lose a game or two and suddenly you are chasing your tail. Then counties are going to start producing green flyers or dust bowls because they are under pressure to win games. And

batsmen will feel they have to go for balls they should be leaving alone. It should be a rule that every match starts on a brand new pitch rather than a used one. It is a step in the right direction but only the first of many steps that need to be taken. More attention needs to be paid to developing the quality of young players and encouraging existing players to stay at home in the close season."

"Too many get on a plane as soon as the season finishes and go off to coach in South Africa or New Zealand and other places. They come back having learned nothing. They would be much better off staying at home working on their own game alongside better players."

David Millns helped Leicestershire win the 1998 County Championship

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planned at Hair's criticism of their off-spinner, Muttiah Muralitharan. In a recently published book Hair described Muralitharan's bowling action as "diabolical" and said he would have no hesitation in balling him in the future.

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THE COACH
Martyn Moxon (Yorkshire)



'Aim for balance between bat and ball'

"I'M NOT against it as I'm sure it will create more interest in Championship cricket, but I don't think it will have the effect of improving the quality."

"The question that needs to be addressed is the matter of getting the pitches right, of achieving a better balance between bat and ball. You need surfaces which allow batsmen to build an innings and force bowlers to work for their wickets. Then standards will get better."

"We are trying to create a successful England team but at the end of the day if you are going to have county matches where 15 wickets are going down on the first day you are not going to produce better players."

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INTERVIEWS BY JON CULLEY

LOTTERY UPDATE.
7, 11, 16, 28, 37, 49. Bonus number: **30.**
£13,035,657 (45% of ticket sales).

AMOUNT FOR EACH WINNER	TOTAL EACH TIER
£943,617	£3,774,468
£177,425	£1,161,375
£999	£725,274
£47	£1,574,351
£10	£5,777,060
	£13,009,528

Breakage (prizes rounded down to nearest: £1) £26,129

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY™

run on Camelot central computer system shall prevail.

SPORT

NEW TEST FOR DE GLANVILLE P24 • FRASER MUST DO IT ALL AGAIN P28

Kidd takes command at Blackburn

BRIAN KIDD is the new manager of Blackburn Rovers on a stunning £750,000 a year contract - and with £40m to spend - after having his ambitions thwarted by Manchester United.

Alex Ferguson's No 2 only walked out to sign for Blackburn until 2002 when United last night failed to give him a written guarantee that he would one day be the No 1 at Old Trafford. One of the main reasons Kidd was lost to United was the takeover move by Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB means no long-term assurances could be given to him.

United fans will be seething that one of their favourite sons has shipped away despite initial claims by their chief executive, Martin Edwards, he would only go "over my dead body".

Kidd met Rovers officials yesterday to discuss terms on a deal that sees his salary rise over four times from its current basic level of £180,000 a year before bonuses at United.

Jack Walker, Blackburn Rovers' owner, has also pledged him a remarkable transfer fund and promised him that he will have the final say on who he wants to bring in from at home or abroad.

Kidd can also appoint his own staff at Blackburn and his old friend, the Manchester City coach, Willie

FOOTBALL

By ALAN NIXON

Donachie, is tipped to be his right hand man.

Kidd spoke to the Old Trafford hierarchy before giving Blackburn his answer as he was desperate for them to make him stay. As a friend said last night: "Brian is not just leaving at the money. He would have stayed if they had said he could be boss down the line."

However United insiders revealed that Kidd could not be given any guarantee in the middle of Murdoch's controversial take-over. Even Ferguson's new contract talks are on hold until that is resolved.

Kidd turned down approaches from Manchester City and Everton in the past, but the club's failure to promise him the job or give him a rise made him insecure. Now he has reluctantly left to take his second crack at management. His first was a brief spell at Preston in 1986.

Ferguson is fuming about Kidd's departure, the way his No 2 has been treated and the timing of the Blackburn move. He has lost his right hand man before United's decisive Champions' League match against Bayern Munich on Wednesday, the club's biggest game for years.

There are no obvious successors within Old Trafford to step into the post. The old boys Brian McClair and Steve Bruce will be linked with the job but neither has Kidd's coaching knowledge. Gordon Strachan, Mark McGhee and Alex McLeish also have appeal, while Preston's David Moyes is admired within the club and is in the Kidd mould.

The vacancy is difficult to fill. Fergie has relied heavily on Kidd in the past couple of years with the coach taking great responsibility while the manager delegates more work to him. The pair have differed on some issues but here is no suggestion of a rift. The only problem is with the uncertainty at boardroom level.

Kidd will face a testing time tempting players to join Blackburn at the foot of the Premier League, but Walker's millions will help. Sources close to Kidd say he will try to sign four or five players quickly and there could be some surprise departures.

Kidd would love to raid Old Trafford but knows the chances of buying from there are slim. He has a good knowledge of foreign talent and the cash to spend. Blackburn are in the black despite Roy Hodgson's spending spree this season. Kidd could also raise more funds by letting players leave.

Sam Chisholm yesterday resigned as a director of Tottenham Hotspur's club and plc boards because of a conflict of interests involving the FA Premier League.

He has been appointed as consultant to the Premier League to advise on future television contracts and League rules state that no employee, or nor consultant, to the Premier League can be a director of a Premier League club.

Chisholm joined Spurs before the start of this season because of his experience of media issues, particularly in television. He was formerly a senior figure at BSkyB. His appointment by the League had already prompted questions from Manchester United's chief executive, Martin Edwards.

Kidd in front line, page 29



Yannick Noah vaults the net in a moment of supreme showboating during yesterday's Honda Challenge seniors match with his fellow Frenchman Guy Forget at Olympia. In an entertaining encounter full of energy and eccentricity, which had the crowd loving every moment, Noah came back to win a tight game 6-7, 6-4, 13-11
Report, page 25; Photograph: David Ashdown

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF BRIAN KIDD

1949: Born 29 May in Collyhurst, Manchester, into a family of Manchester United supporters.

1963: Signs schoolboy forms with United.

1964: Becomes an apprentice at United.

1966: Turns professional at Old Trafford.

1967: Makes League debut in 3-1 defeat at Everton in August. The following month he scores his first League goal in a 3-1 victory at West Ham.

1968: Marks his 19th birthday by scoring in United's 4-1 extra-time triumph over Benfica in the European Cup final at Wembley.

1974: Leaves Old Trafford to join Arsenal after making 264 appearances for United and scoring 70 goals.

1976: Moves from Highbury to join Manchester City in July.

1979: Leaves Maine Road to sign for Everton in March.

1980: Joins Bolton and then goes to play in the United States for four years.

1984: Returns to England to become manager of Barrow.

1985: Appointed Lou Macari's assistant at Swindon before he becomes No 2 at Preston North End.

1986: Manages Preston for three months between January and March.

1988: Alex Ferguson brings him back to Manchester United as junior coach and director of the club's school of excellence in May.

1990: Becomes United's youth development officer and helps nurture the club's current crop of young stars.

1991: Steps up to become Ferguson's assistant following Archie Knox's decision to join Walter Smith at Rangers.

1993: United refuse Manchester City permission to speak to him about their vacant manager's job in June.

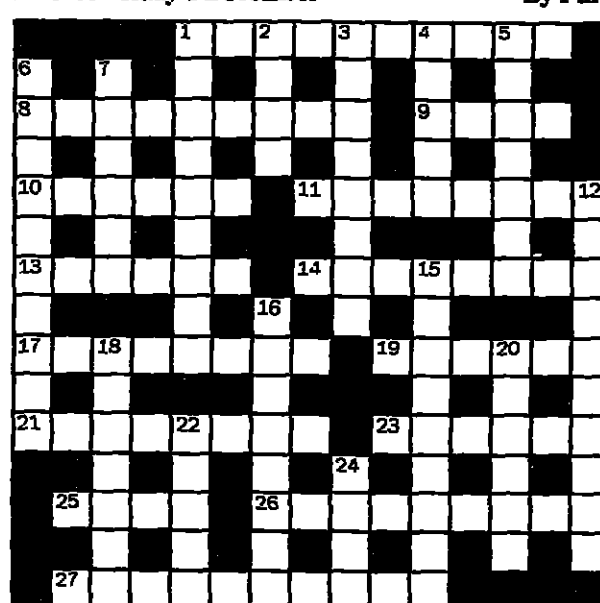
1998: United rebuff Everton's attempts to lure him back to Goodison in the summer and he is rewarded with a new four-year contract. Blackburn target him as their new manager, following the departure of Roy Hodgson.

THE FRIDAY CROSSWORD

No.3785 Friday 4 December

By Phil

Thursday's solution



SPHOUSE CURRANTS
ACQUAINTANCE
BUCKBOARD VOICE
OULIAGE AVIATION
YRULLES SILLUETTE
ADORABLE
GLEAM REECHOED
ELEVATE
MINCEPIE MECCA
ELEVATE
CENTRAL OPENERS
LIDLE PRIME
ANNOY ELECTRIFY
IG AND OSE
RESOLUTE AENEAS

ACROSS

- 1 American man encountering Communist's argument is totally uninterested (5,5)
- 8 A girl more disposed for palaver? (9)
- 9 Make fun of dress with no front (4)
- 10 A rumpus back in second year (6)
- 11 Man faced with double Dutch? (8)
- 13 Partners in game each with a yen to refuse (3,3)
- 14 I'm sorry but I don't want to be hung (6,2)
- 17 Operatic heroine - girl in Algiers? (8)
- 19 Easy part of exams - I'm pleased (6)
- 21 College subject too

DOWN

- 2 much for such a brain-box? (8)
- 3 Certainly a display of selfishness (6)
- 5 Intend soldiers to capture leader of army (4)
- 6 When audiences rise on Radio 3, say, broadcast's kept back (5,4)
- 7 Fixed a place for punishing work (5-5)
- 1 Monopoly? Directors ready for that (5,4)
- 2 Fell over in a space (4)
- 3 English diaries incorrigibly showing a significant date! (4,4)
- 4 Cheers enveloping a British politician in Florida city (5)
- 5 Lie's a source of

- 6 Irritation when it's not right (7)
- 7 Punishment area in which priest is working, very affected (6,4)
- 7 Turn nasty if guy gets upset about a bit of lip (6)
- 12 Article irritates some of the Isle of Wight (3,7)
- 15 Kill gangster's leader? Lift-shaft should be successful (5,4)
- 16 Plays put out by inhabitant of Australia? (8)
- 18 A mostly sick people beginning to treat disease (7)
- 20 A brief description of Soviet Union before the break-up? (6)
- 22 Unstable chap rocks endlessly (5)
- 24 Note shortened skirt (4)

Historic vote passes two-division format

CRICKET

By DAVID LLEWELLYN

THE SPACE SHUTTLE may not have got off the ground yesterday, but English cricket blasted off into the 21st century as history was made at Lord's when the England and Wales Cricket Board voted overwhelmingly for a two-divisional County Championship beginning in the year 2000.

A vote of 15-1 with three abstentions was a complete turnaround from last year, when only seven first-class counties voted for the change when the ECB chairman, Lord MacLaurin, had presented his report "Raising the Standard".

"It has pleased me a great deal," MacLaurin said. "It is a very important day for the game. It will add an edge to the Championship, beginning next year when the top line will form the First Division."

The object of the change, which will end 110 years of the one-divisional County Championship first recognised in 1889, is to harden the competitive edge of the England team and produce a stronger Test side, but MacLaurin tempered his delight when he added: "It is a move forward, but it is not the answer as to why we are underachieving at Test level."

"It is part of the jigsaw we put together to raise standards and most of those things are now in operation. We have 400 professional players in first-class cricket in this country and we should be one of the best Test teams in the world."

David Graveney, chairman of the England selectors and chief executive of the Professional

Cricketers' Association, which safeguards the interests of players and is responsible for their training, education and welfare, welcomed the move. "I've always been pro a two-divisional championship. The benefits are difficult to quantify at this stage, but we will probably start to see them from next season when cricket will be played closer to the edge, so to speak."

The solitary vote against the change was that of Glamorgan. "It is irrelevant what we at Glamorgan thought," their captain, Matthew Maynard, said. "My impression was that the championship had grown stronger lately, with a number of sides proving that they could win it. But we have to be positive, there is no point in being any other way. It will be an historic season next year, and in the year 2000 I just hope I will be around to take part in the new format. It does mean that next summer it will be desperately important to finish in the top nine."

The three abstentions were Marylebone Cricket Club, Essex and Durham.

The Essex chairman, David Achfeld, said: "We were not against English cricket moving forward. We did not support 'no change', we were against two divisions and we did support a regional scheme. In the end we abstained because we felt there was nothing for us to vote for."

Matthew Engel, the editor of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack,

the game's bible, was against the decision. He said: "There are some short-term advantages in enhancing interest and increasing the chances of sponsorship. But in the long term I think it will be damaging and work against England's chances of winning Tests because it will create conflict between club and country."

In the end the vote would appear to have been a formality. Lord MacLaurin said: "Last September it was all done in a bit of a rush. I wanted two divisions then but we were not in a position to put any financial safeguards in place."

The question of England players being contracted to the ECB is expected to be resolved when the First Class Forum meets again next March. The ECB's player registration regulations will remain largely as they are, something which Graveney welcomed, since half his PCA membership would be in the Second Division.

The Super Cup, involving the top eight finishers in next season's championship, will continue in the first year of the new format.

Other decisions included: A free hit for no-balls in the 45-over National League, which begins next season.

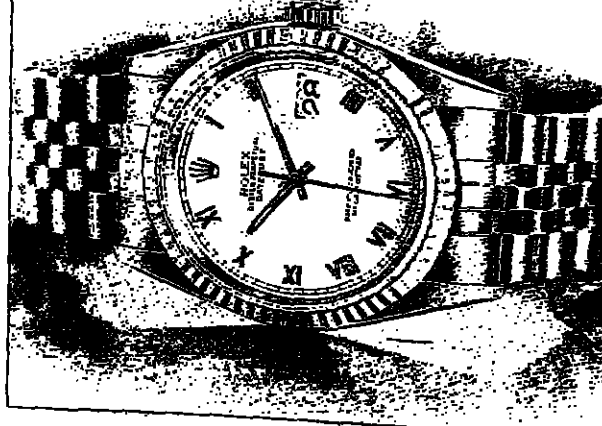
The points system in the County Championship to change to 12 for a win (with bonus points remaining at four each for batting and bowling), and a draw increased from three points to four.

Professionals' verdict, page 28

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הרפורמה נכונה ונחוצה

Its place in history (if it ever gets off the ground): the first white elephant in orbit and the most expensive public relations exercise on earth

DESIGN

Chile awakens

Sir: The judgment of the Law Lords on Pinochet's immunity has been historic for the Chilean people.

Just before Pinochet's miscalculated trip to England, our country had been portrayed as an example of a civilised nation that had left the sins of its past behind. Chile has been marketed to the world as a country with a great entrepreneurial spirit, a strong economy, as a model of transition to a democratic state. Pinochet was transformed from dictator to wise elder statesman. He was presented as a key political figure in this transition process, able to effect agreements between the military, the right, and the government.

Forgetting the crimes of the dictatorship was central to this peculiar Chilean democracy. Chile has a new constitution that enshrines the right of the military to intervene if governmental policy does not go its way. It ensures a right of veto to the most conservative sectors of Chilean society by giving 22 per cent of the senate to unelected members. The armed forces have the right to appoint their commanders-in-chief; they have 10 per cent of the income from the revenues of Chile's main natural resource, copper; they are protected against criminal investigation by the 1978 Amnesty Law.

In Chile justice has only been symbolic. The crimes of the military regime - torture, hostage-taking, genocide and exile - have been side-stepped in order not to upset the armed forces. Economic triumphalism has been used to show that Chile is a model of stability and economic growth, and all of this thanks to Pinochet. (Figures from the Inter-American Development Bank show that Chile is one of 10 nations with the worst distribution records; most wealth goes to less than 10 per cent of the population.)

Thanks to Pinochet's trip, the Chilean people have awoken to reality. Pinochet has no immunity beyond Chile and can be brought to trial for his crimes against humanity. The whole structure of the protected Chilean democracy has been shaken by the ruling of the Law Lords.

The return of Pinochet to Chile would mean impunity and would be an obstacle to further progress on Chile's democratic process.

Pinochet should be extradited to Spain. He and those involved in crimes against humanity should be held accountable by the international community. This would be the best way to help Chilean democracy.

S VASQUEZ
Hanover, New Hampshire, USA

Sir: There are some points that I feel I must take up with Maria Vasquez-Aguilar (letter 2 December).

While I feel Pinochet should stand trial, I wouldn't be happy if this were done in Spain since the Spanish hardly have clean hands in the matter of Chile and other parts of South America.

For centuries the Spanish conquistadores, settlers and Inquisition made life hell for the indigenous population. Millions are estimated to have died at Spanish hands.

There is also the little matter of the Basques, most of whom are not terrorists and whose treatment by the Spanish government is brutal in the extreme.

Does Senora Vasquez-Aguilar really think the Spanish should be the ones to judge another on the matter of crimes against humanity?

PATRICIA ANN WILSON
London EN5

Sir: In seeking the wisdom of Solomon from Jack Straw on the case of ex-President Pinochet, we may lose sight of the fact that it is grossly unfair and highly inappropriate for a decision of this kind to be expected of a British Home Secretary at all.

We need to learn internationally

the core lesson of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission that it is necessary to know what has gone on (the killings, torture and human abuse) but that it is not necessary to extract revenge. Because there are no international instruments to bring people to trial for "crimes against humanity" (and we have to rely on random coincidences of travel arrangements and legal procedures) it does not follow that we could not devise some international body, on the model of a grand jury, to ascertain the facts, whether or not there were a judicial body to act on them. This would prevent any abuse of what will surely be the precedent to be set by Jack Straw, whichever way he decides. Without such a body the international community, not to mention the media, will find it hard to distinguish between the awful and the horrendous.

But, beyond that, the biblical message seems to be that revenge does not actually benefit the victims, however legitimate their grievance and profound their grief. Of course, the assumption that "fairness" demands retribution is deep in the human psyche. It is this instinct that we need to grow out of, a colossal task, while making every possible effort to expose the truth of what happened in the worst cases.

The Rev PETER BRAIN
Secretary for Church and Society
The United Reformed Church
London WC1

Sir: If Jack Straw were minded to send General Pinochet back to Chile, he should reflect that Britain would then have morally and ethically to agree that Libya has the duty under the Montreal Convention of 1971 to try in Libya the two officials suspected of planting the Lockerbie bomb.

MARTIN CADMAN
Burnham Market, Norfolk

Sir: One useful side-effect of the House of Lords ruling in the Pinochet case is that in future dictators will have to ensure that more money is spent building up their own countries' health facilities, so that should they experience back problems in later life, they do not have to risk travelling to countries with unfriendly legal systems.

NIGEL WILKINS
London SW7

Europe or America

Sir: The big names of the European Movement are right to emphasise the need for government realism (letter 30 November). But we need to be at the centre of euro-Europe for more reasons than the economic and financial one, important though that is.

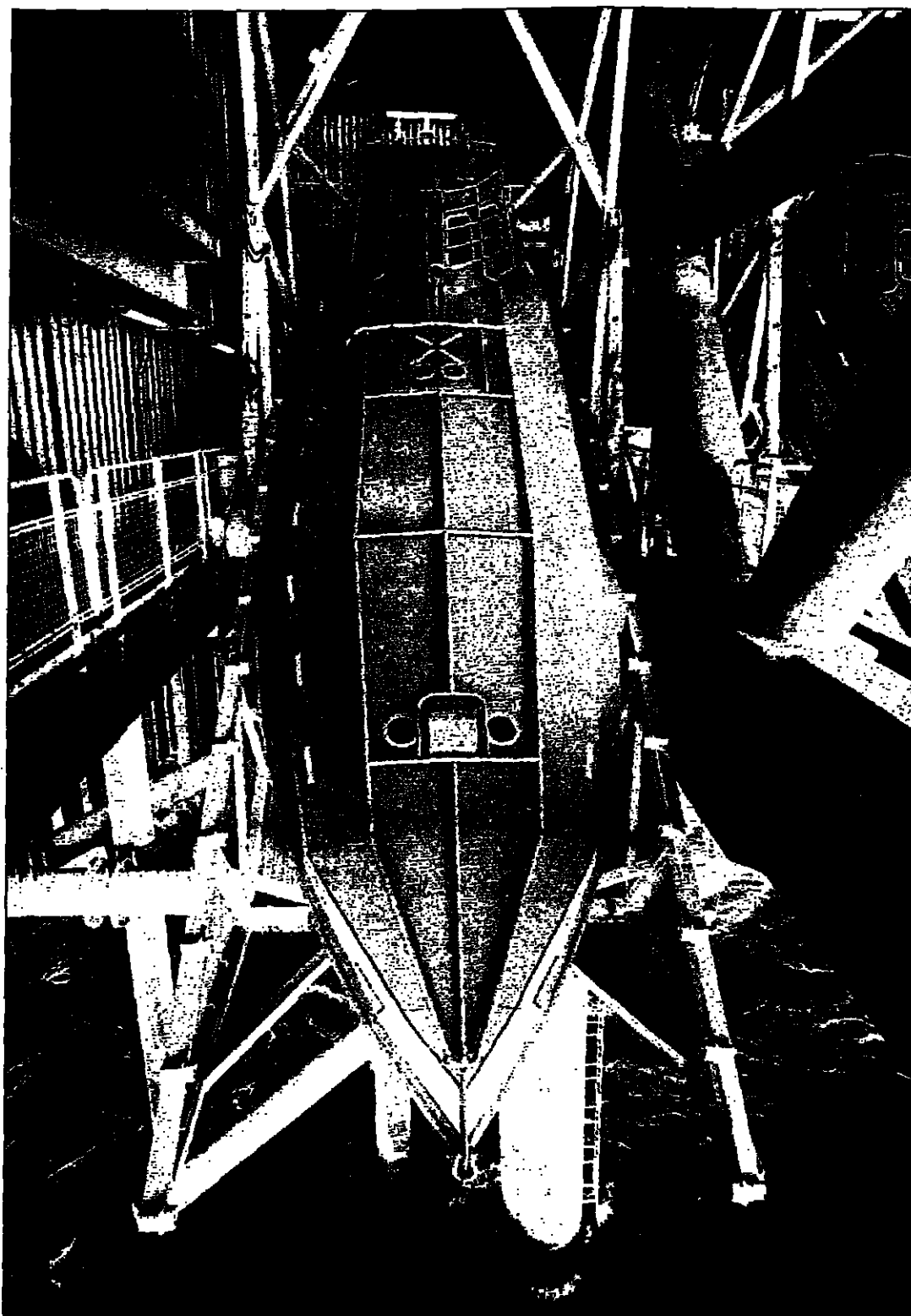
Two other reasons are interconnected: the fundamental changes the US administration, at the behest of the US Senate, is proposing for Nato; and human rights and the international rule of law, brought suddenly to a head by the unexpected presence of General Pinochet.

In each, Britain must make an unambiguous decision or events will take it for us. "Straddling" is not on offer from either side of the Atlantic.

In agreeing to the enlargement of Nato earlier this year, the all-powerful Senator Helms, Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, imposed certain legally binding conditions on the administration: Nato to defend "our shared interests and values" whereover they are threatened; no longer to accept the authority of the UN Security Council or the Charter; and to set a "firebreak" on discussions with Russia. (He also wants to inspect our defence budgets for sufficiency.) All these

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Roaring Forties No 5: One of the five free-fall lifeboats on the Nelson platform in the Forties region of the North Sea. In an emergency the boats are boarded from the stern and plunge from their slipways straight into the sea, surfacing about 50m clear of the platform. Neville Elder

provisions the administration is now obediently proposing for insertion in the revised Nato Strategic Concept, to be signed up to next year at the Washington summit.

So EMG has, now, to decide whether or not to accept the proposals, which would breach our commitments to the United Nations and to international law (and common sense) and which many of our Nato colleagues in Europe strongly object to. Which way will Tony Blair decide?

On Pinochet, the Law Lords have moved the world one precedent closer to an international body of human rights law, of which the International Criminal Court that was agreed by 120 nations in Rome last summer will be the outward and visible tool. Senator Helms has advised - in effect, ordered - the

administration to fight the ICC by every means at its disposal. Which way will Jack Straw decide?

Lord KENNETH
ELIZABETH YOUNG
London SW1

Sir: Officers of the European Movement endorse a statement signed by 114 business people who claim to represent the view of British business ("Grandees tell Blair to stop stalling on Europe", 30 November). They do not comment, however, on the small print of the statement, which contained an intriguing line: "Membership of the single currency, if it works well, will promote trade, investment, and economic growth. Each of these helps to create jobs."

One must ask what happens if it does not work well.

At the best of times, the

structural, political and social variations across Europe suggest a "one hat fits all" approach to monetary policy will be fraught with difficulties. Yet national monetary policies will be abandoned on 1 January in favour of a single euro interest rate. A "weighted average" Euro interest rate will frequently be wholly inappropriate for many of the participants.

Equally worrying, the issue of European tax harmonisation appears firmly on the agenda. If the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, insists the UK can resist tax proposals from Brussels, let him explain why, for example, European law forbids him to reduce VAT on fuel to zero? "Harmonisation" is a huge threat to business in this country. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the labour markets. In the

UK, non-wage labour costs (taxes, social security contributions and regulation costs) account for 40 per cent of wages. This compares with 82 per cent in Germany, 93 per cent in France and 102 per cent in Italy. This is a major reason why aggregate unemployment in the euro-11 countries has remained stubbornly above 10 per cent in the last five years, whilst UK unemployment has halved to around 5 per cent.

EMU is a dangerous risk for the UK.

PAUL CRAVEN
Godalming,
Surrey

Embassy bombing

Sir: Robert Fisk's article on the two Palestinians jailed for conspiracy to bomb the Israeli embassy in London (26 November) is based on the notion that Reda Moghrabi, who may or may not even exist, may have been an Israeli agent. Leading Palestinians have stated that the Israeli authorities were responsible for some of the recent terrorist bombings in Israel. It is depressing to see *The Independent* giving credence to the absurd notion that the Israelis are responsible for bombing their own embassies.

Samar Alami, one of the jailed pair, was a supporter of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a group which has murdered many Jews around the world in the name of the Palestinian struggle. These have included attacks on synagogues, kosher restaurants and Jewish community leaders whose only connection to Israel was a shared religion. No wonder Samar Alami "took an interest in Jewish affairs".

The building destroyed in Argentina a week before the London attacks was not the Israeli embassy, but a Jewish community centre, and many of the 96 victims of that bomb were Jewish children at kindergarten. The Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires was actually blown up in 1992, killing 30 people. That, too, has been attributed in some quarters to an Israeli-planted device.

NEVILLE NAGLER
Director General
The Board of Deputies of British
Jews
London WC1

Sir: Thank you for the articles by Robert Fisk ("Riddle of man behind Israeli embassy bomb", 26 November), pointing out the many riddles about who was behind the bomb in the Israeli embassy in London in 1994.

The fact that the Israeli embassy security video cameras were apparently not working on the day of the explosion is strange. The well-publicised revelations by the former MI5 employee David Shayler included one stating that MI5 was in receipt of enough information about the embassy bombings to have prevented them. Now, however, the Crown Prosecution Service is applying for Public Interest Immunity hearings which will withhold this information from Samar Alami and Jawad Botmi, the two convicted of conspiring to cause explosions and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment, and also from their lawyers.

Justice demands that all this information should be released without further delay. If the British Government and judicial system refuse this, Ms Alami and Mr Botmi, who have always protested their innocence, are being deprived of potentially crucial grounds for their appeal.

JEAN WADGE
Cuffley,
Hertfordshire

IN BRIEF

anyone, least of all an openly gay man.

PETER TATCHELL
Outrage!,
London SW14

Sir: I wonder how Mr Tatchell would react if a group of Christians were to invade his office, seat themselves upon his desk as he was preparing

one of his gracious "outing" invitations, and preach a good old Gospel sermon to him?

MAUREEN WARREN
Newport, Gwent

Sir: With a German Finance Minister called Lafontaine and his French opposite number Strauss-Kahn, one wonders how much further European union has still to go?

TOM CORLETT
London HA5



MILES KINGDON
'I could never resist the appeal of RAC men at motorway service areas. I joined four times in all'

and unhappy standing there, that I joined four times in all. Took out life memberships every time, too.

Counsel: I see. And on this occasion did you ring the RAC of which you were such a multi-serving member?

Plaintiff: Unfortunately, I had left all my documents at home, so I didn't have their telephone number. I rang Directory Inquiries on my mobile and asked them for the RAC number. They gave it to me and then I rang the number I had been given. They answered, and I asked them to come to my aid. They wanted to know if I was a member. I said I was.

Counsel: What happened next?

Plaintiff: I gave my position and they said they would do their best. About 40 minutes later a van arrived and five people got out.

Counsel: Five people? That seems rather a lot to mend a car...

Plaintiff: That's what I said. I said

that five seemed a lot to mend a car. They said that only one of them was any good at mending a car. He started looking in the bonnet.

Counsel: What did the others do?

Plaintiff: They put on make-up, changed costumes and performed an extract from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Counsel: Isn't that an unusual thing for garage mechanics to do?

Plaintiff: Yes, but it turned out they weren't garage mechanics. Upon questioning, they turned out to be from the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Counsel: Why on earth...?

Plaintiff: Because the idiots at Directory Inquiries had thought that when I asked for the number of the RAC, I was asking for the RSC! Do sound very alike, admittedly...

Blair 'climdown'?

Sir: When a government acts in a heavy-handed and dictatorial manner it is rightly criticised. Why then, when a government acts in an adult manner by compromising on, say, House of Lords reform, does the media brand it as a U-turn or an "embarrassing climdown"? ("Hague sacks Cranborne in row over Lords", 3 December)? If we want grown-up politics in this country the media has to help by reporting in a grown-up way.

CHRIS CLARK
Oxford

Sir: Tom Marshall (letter 25 November) says that it is "patent rubbish" to declare that the existence of a non-hereditary head of state renders a country democratic. Quite so, but he then goes on to say that, as everyone in Britain has a vote, that makes it a democracy.

Universal suffrage may be a prerequisite of democracy, but it is no guarantee of enfranchisement, without which any "democracy" is a sham. Everyone in the former Soviet Union had the vote.

GEORGE PEARSON
London E3

Sir: The arcane "Ruritanian" titles of the Lords should indeed be dropped in the reform process (letter 3 December).

If the Cranborne plan succeeds, Continuing Hereditary Upper-House MPs would be Chumps. Their former colleagues, being disenfranchised upper-house MPs, would of course be Dumps. Life-peers would be Lumps. Blair's appointees would be Bumps.

If Cranborne's deal fails, every member of the reformed upper house would simply be a Rump.

TOM SAUL
London SE26

Scots out in the cold

Sir: In arguing the economic case for Scottish independence, Hamish McRae appears to assume Scottish membership of the European Union "Scotland can pay its own way". 1 December, with all the access to the huge EU markets that this includes.

But a newly independent Scotland would have to apply to join and be accepted by the Council of Ministers. Would Spain, conscious of separatist voices among Basques and Catalans, vote to reward separatist Scots in this way? Would France consider that to do so was sending the right message to Corsica? Germany now includes the Kingdom of Bavaria, but what nationalist ideas might take root if secession was shown to be an easy matter of separate membership of the club? Italy is already struggling to keep hold of Tuscany. Belgians might reasonably fear what such an example would show to Wallonia and Flanders.

Has any Scottish nationalist asked the present British Prime Minister, or other Cabinet members, whether they would be minded to vote for the inclusion of a newly seceded Scotland in the EU?

It could be awfully cold out there.

PETER GRESHAM
London, W14

Sir: Your leading article of 30 November suggests that we should rejoice at the prospects of Quebecois and Scottish separatism. In the same edition, a news report informs us that many of Quebec's English-speakers have "upped and left in despair". The lesson is that separatist nationalism can bring with it chauvinism and internal strife. In this respect, Scotland should take Quebec not as an example but as a warning.

PETER A RUSSELL
Glasgow

Oscar award

Sir: Given Tom Lubbock's views on the new sculpture to Oscar Wilde ("It's got to go", 1 December) I wonder what Wilde himself would have said about it?

HELEN HARAN
St Albans, Hertfordshire

We will make a melodrama out of a crisis

A MOST extraordinary case is going on in the High Court at the moment, in which a motorist is suing Directory Inquiries for damages. He claims that because they gave him the wrong information, his car was ruined beyond repair. Directory Inquiries have never been successfully sued before, so if they lose this case it will make legal history.

To give you some idea of the issues involved, I am bringing you part of yesterday's proceedings.

Counsel: Now, you are bringing this action against Directory Inquiries, are you not?

Plaintiff: I certainly am.

Counsel: What is your name, please?

Plaintiff: My name is James Witherspoon of 27 The Avenue, Broadport, I am 43 years old, and married

with two children, and the registration number of my green four-door Nissan is...

Counsel: Do you always give this needless data when asked for your name?

Plaintiff: I do, yes. As a business traveller I do a lot of signing into hotels, and I find that they usually want to know everything.

Counsel: I see. And on 17 July were you driving down from London to Malvern?

Plaintiff: Yes, I was. I was going to a very important business meeting.

Counsel: How important?

Plaintiff: All business meetings are very important.

Counsel: But what if a meeting is not really very important?

Plaintiff: Then we call it something else.

Counsel: Like what?

Plaintiff: Like lunch. Or touching base.

Counsel: I see. So there you are, driving from London to Malvern...

Plaintiff: And my car breaks down near Cirencester.

Counsel: Did you attempt to mend it?

Plaintiff: No, I did not. It would invalidate the insurance. I am a member of the RAC so I determined to ring them for aid.

Counsel: Had you been a member of the RAC for long?

Plaintiff: Long and often. I joined the RAC in 1988. I joined again in 1990, and twice in 1992.

Counsel: Why did you keep joining the RAC?

Plaintiff: Because I am soft-hearted and could never resist the appeal of the RAC men at motorway service areas. They looked so cold

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An uncommon row that highlights Mr Hague's failings

AT THREE minutes past three on Wednesday afternoon, Tony Blair was surprised and on the defensive, the massed benches of New Labour behind him silent and disbelieving at the betrayal of the core manifesto promise to expel the hereditary peers from parliament.

Five minutes later, however, roles were reversed, as it became clear that William Hague was rejecting the deal negotiated by the Conservative leader in the House of Lords. As theatre, it was gripping, although it took a little longer to work out that it was Mr Hague who was the principal loser from the exchange. It was not until he failed to find an alternative leader of the Tories in the Lords who agreed with him that he began to look seriously foolish.

He then had to explain why he had sacked Lord Cranborne and replaced him with Lord Strathclyde, who also supports the Cranborne-Blair deal. So the House of Lords will vote for the compromise, in which the numbers of hereditaries will be cut by nine-tenths, and Mr Hague will be powerless to stop it. Which means, in turn, that the Tory leader has managed to engineer a split between the Tories in the Commons and the Lords by being more forceful in defence of the hereditaries than they themselves.

Mr Hague is now in a very difficult position. Although the instant commentaries held that his leadership is not in question, the truth is that, of course, it is. In many ways, this is unfair: Mr Hague is a superb performer in the Commons: bright, quick-witted and with a deadly sense of humour; a combination of Harold Wilson and John Smith.

To no avail, however. The non-political majority of the electorate simply have no time for him. He fails utterly to "come across" on television, which is as serious a failing as anything else in modern politics. This is especially apparent by contrast with Mr Blair, whose success as a mass communicator eclipses almost all else. More than that, though, Mr Hague now appears incompetent: to lose so many of his Lords frontbenchers emphasises that. His judgement on Lords reform has been wrong throughout, saved only by the Government's stubborn defence of the closed-list system of proportional representation. It is hard now to see how he can last until the next election.

But Mr Blair is fortunate that Mr Hague's ignominy has eclipsed his own less-than-edifying backstairs dealings. There is a good argument for cutting the deal with Lord Cranborne, which is that it will short-cut months of constitutional trench warfare – trench ping-pong, at least. If that will unblock the logjam of the legislative programme, it might allow the Government to get through all sorts of Bills it should never have left out of the Queen's Speech, such as on Freedom of Information, a Food Standards Agency and a national rail authority.

But the deal contradicts Mr Blair's presentation of him-



self as a straight arrow. In public, he described the survival of the hereditaries as "a democratic monstrosity", while in private he was hatching a plot to keep some of them. This is not "saying what we mean and meaning what we say" because, while this deal might make eventual abolition easier, we doubt it will make it quicker. Margaret Jay said the deal meant "we'll probably get them all out by the time of the general election". Neither Labour's manifesto nor last week's Queen's Speech said anything about "probably".

Now that Mr Blair's two-stage reform of the Lords has developed a stage 1a and a stage 1b, he urgently needs to respond to the charge that he is creating a House of Cronies by spelling out a system by which most life peers would be appointed by an independent body. And he needs to accelerate the Royal Commission so that a system of democratic election of at least half the members of the Upper House can be agreed well before the next election.

Pause to wonder at these modern miracles

THE SORT of thing that was a big story 2,000 years ago is now a medical commonplace. Today we report a breakthrough in the cure of the most common form of blindness. Early results from trials suggest that there is hope for those suffering macular degeneration, a wearing-out of the retina which affects many people over the age of 60. Yesterday we reported the analysis of likely trends in medicine in the next 50 years, from the publishers of the *British Medical Journal*. They include artificial wombs, the transplant of pigs' nerve cells to treat Parkinson's disease, and electronic chips implanted in the body.

The changes in medical technology over the past 50 years – since the founding of the National Health Service – have been astonishing enough. Hip replacement is now

a routine operation. The same applies to heart bypass. The development of anti-depressants has transformed the quality of life for thousands. Advances in scanning and microsurgery have reduced the need for invasive treatment. IVF is now considered a right of infertile couples.

Of course, the pace of these developments puts great pressure on the funding of the NHS, and poses serious ethical challenges of prioritising and rationing. So far we have muddled through – in terms of both resources and ethics – although the new technology of genetic manipulation does, in fact, take us far beyond the dilemmas of today, into a genuinely brave new world. But surely the important point is to retain some of the sense of wonder that attended biblical miracles. Research scientists, the medical profession, the drugs companies and the NHS have served us outstandingly well in the past half-century, and not all of them have received much thanks.

Nowadays, if someone in a white coat told us "take up thy bed and walk", we should be inclined to believe them.

Please applaud the first act of a dazzling Tory pantomime

EVERY NOW and again the Conservatives put on an entertainment at Westminster that outstrips any competition in London's nearby theatres: "Ladies and Gentlemen, the party which brought you the comic double act of Ken Clarke and John Redwood in last year's leadership contest, the party that forced a sitting prime minister to resign as leader of his party, so that he could be re-elected, now brings you a special Christmas pantomime starring our latest leader, who sacks a colleague for negotiating a deal which the leader himself supports."

These performances are symptoms of a wider malaise: the politicians who would be less inclined to perform like members of a travelling circus if they were operating in more conducive political circumstances. William Hague has not taken leave of his political senses. Nor had John Major when he remained prime minister, but stood down as party leader. Even Clarke and Redwood were acting rationally. It was the political context that was irrational.

So sure-footed before becoming leader, Hague has been damaged by his party's lack of any coherent direction. Although this latest crisis is not directly related to Europe, there is a clear connection. Major was pilloried for being too flexible and indecisive. Hague has responded by being a "tough" leader. He talks about the "smack of firm leadership", usually when a section of his party is in near-fatal revolt.

Clearly Lord Cranborne demonstrated an arrogance which only a hereditary peer could possess, by

undertaking some freelance negotiations over Lords reform. But Hague should not have sacked him without making sure that he could rely on the support of other senior peers. Obviously, such a consideration was secondary to the need for an assertion of leadership. "Discipline" was required.

Strong leadership comes only when a leader is genuinely strong and his party is subservient. As leader of the opposition Tony Blair could do whatever he wanted, because his party would let him. Hague is not in such a privileged position, and the more he pretends to use the "smack of firm leadership" in the coming years, the more his party will delight us with further pantomimes. His current position demands nimble footwork and conciliatory gestures rather than confrontational grandstanding. He needs to be more like Harold Wilson than Margaret Thatcher.

But the malaise is not just to do with tactics. The vacuum in policy has been the other reason why normally shrewd tacticians have so readily scored own goals. Again, this is not the fault entirely of the circus performers. The state of the party has demanded obscurity. Major's "wait and see" policy on the euro was devised to keep his party united, rather than out of any conviction on his part (he would have preferred to have ruled out early entry into the single currency). Clarke and Redwood openly disagreed, and tried to make a virtue out of their collective incoherence.

In this case Hague did not dare to make his mind up on what he really wants to do with the hereditary peers.



STEVE RICHARDS

There are storms ahead for Labour over Lords reform but Tory ineptitude makes the journey less daunting

Last February Hague made a clever speech on constitutional reform which combined high principle with political cunning. Much of it was clear: He accepted the principle of a London mayor; openly changing the party's policy. In the light of the referendum, he accepted, too, the introduction of a Scottish parliament. Quite rightly he raised the implications for England of such a policy, a genuinely strong card for the Tories. But then he moved on to the House of Lords and started playing a dangerous political game.

He began by hinting that the Conservatives would no longer support hereditary peers:

"The balance of power in society has changed. Conservatives are therefore open to suggestions about how membership of the Lords might

be changed, too, and whether the hereditary principle is the right one to employ when choosing members for the House."

So did that mean that Hague was receptive to reform? Well, not exactly, no: "Understanding the value of inheritance and the way families pass down values and duties from one generation to the next, Conservatives are not surprised that hereditary peers, no longer required or able to represent the landed and property interest, nevertheless make a valuable contribution to the provision of this remarkable service."

Hague was trying to be too clever by half. Opposing hereditary peers would have split his party, but appearing to support them wholeheartedly would not exactly make the new Tory leader seem "modern". So he has been functioning on that dangerous terrain where tactics become all that matters.

In such circumstances, political antennae very easily become blunted and Hague has fallen into a trap which both Neil Kinnock and Tony Blair carefully avoided in opposition. Both Kinnock and Blair caused internal conflict over issues that made them more popular – attacking Militant and removing Clause Four. Hague has contrived to be in the bizarre position of defending hereditary peers, while taking on his own hereditary peers in the process.

This is a performance with a sequel and it is one where the Government, too, will face dangers. Its concession takes some of the radical zing out of the phase one reform. This will have

a Pythonesque dimension to it, as well: the Abolition of the Hereditary Peers (except for 98 of them) Bill. A historic reform, being carried out incrementally, becomes a little more incremental. Nor do I detect a clear sense of timing. Baroness Jay seemed to suggest in interviews that, now, phase two reform could be implemented this side of the election. Other senior ministers consider this to be unlikely. Whatever the precise arrangements, the phase two reform moves closer into view, and with it come all the old thorny issues.

Ministers predict that the powers of a fully reformed upper chamber will remain as they are. This will not satisfy more ardent reformers who argue that a democratic second chamber should be given more responsibilities. But some Labour MPs will be wary of a chamber acquiring any more legitimacy, even if it gets no more powers. There are storms ahead for the Government over Lords reform, but Tory ineptitude now makes the journey less daunting. For although there are doubts in government circles about tactics and outcome, the Conservatives have obliged once again by flaunting their own divisions.

With eccentric peers lining up on College Green yesterday afternoon, invoking Wellington and Palmerston to explain their resignations, it has been the Tories' most dazzling performance yet. Messrs Hague and Cranborne should step forward and take a bow.

The writer is political editor of the *New Statesman*

UNLESS REPUBLICANS mean to drop any consideration of impeachment articles on the obstruction of justice allegations that Mr Starr sent to Congress, they must attempt to clarify ambiguities in the factual record that he compiled. The grave impact of perjury on the judicial system is certainly a fair point for Republicans to make in the context of this inquiry, but it is no substitute for the establishment of the rigorous factual record that is necessary to debate whether a national election should be overturned by impeaching a president.

The Washington Post

IT APPEARS likely that the full House will vote, by a slim majority, to impeach the President on one count of perjury. The Senate will then take the House's action under advisement. And there, the issue will die. Throwing Clinton out of office was never really an option.

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
The US press comments on developments in the Bill Clinton impeachment inquiry

The votes in the Senate were never there. A House vote of impeachment for perjury would nevertheless stand as an rebuke for conduct unbecoming. It is a rebuke that Clinton

fully deserves. It would haunt him through history. *Boston Globe*

THE DEMOCRATS seem incapable of coming to grips with

Clinton's abuses of his office and the fact that there is an impeachment panel up and running. Republicans have begun to sound like people who've concluded they will face their duty irrespective of polls or politics. That duty should include a commitment to reauthorize the Hyde committee's impeachment mandate if the Clinton factions continue to try to bulldoze this impeachment inquiry toward the cliff. *Wall Street Journal*

IF CONCERN about public opinion or doubts about Starr's case keep the House from voting to impeach, then it ought to get on with the business of censuring the President. The growing risk is that Republicans will split over censure and impeachment, and Clinton will stroll away scot-free. That would be the worst outcome. That's why Republicans need to get back on track, and, at last, let themselves be counted. *Chicago Daily Herald*

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I ceased to be a guardsman 40 years ago. Mr Hague can talk about discipline as long as he likes."
Lord Onslow,
Conservative peer

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Perfect behaviour is born of complete indifference."
Cesare Pavese,
Italian author



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PANDORA

AS IF strife in the Lords were not enough for beleaguered Tory leader William Hague, his Commons troops don't seem to be falling into line either. At this week's Foreign Affairs Select Committee, where the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, was the witness, Pandora is told that none of the Conservative members turned up. In a week when Europe has been a recurring issue (only knocked off the headlines by Hague's sacking of Lord Cranborne), the meeting of the Committee was surely as good an opportunity as any to get Cook wriggling? Pandora contacted the Tories on the Committee - Virginia Bottomley, Sir Peter Emery, Sir John Stanley and David Wiltshire - to check their excuses. Emery was on parliamentary business in Oslo. Bottomley was attending a meeting at the British Council, where she is vice-chair. As for Wiltshire and Stanley, neither have yet returned our calls. Perhaps to avoid further lapses in opposition, William Hague should buy his MPs some diaries this Christmas.

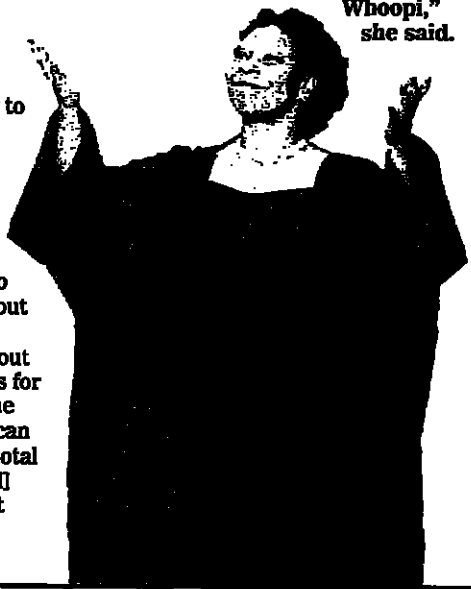
LIZ HURLEY recently revealed some items she would like to find in her own Christmas stocking this year (See Pandora, 30 November). Now the perfect gift idea has arrived. IEG, an American company, is producing a series of videos entitled *Sex Lives of the Stars*. In it, reports the *New York Post*, lookalikes of Michael Jordan, Leonardo Di Caprio, Jerry Seinfeld and Hugh Grant will reenact scenes described by women who claim to have had sexual encounters with them. Divine Brown, the Hollywood prostitute caught with Grant, will play a starring role. Happy viewing, Liz.

PANDORA HAS been contacted by a reader who claims to have been a fellow pupil of *The Sunday Times*' wunderkind Rupert Steiner. Readers will remember that Steiner confessed that his "first break" into journalism came from selling stories about his schoolmates to the tabloids, a confession designed to promote his new book *My First Break: How Entrepreneurs Get Started*. Our reader is unlikely to be turning up to the launch of Steiner's book, he writes: "I had the misfortune to be one of the pupils you refer to in your article about Rupert Steiner... Selling stories about your school mates for money is about the lowest thing you can do. This guy is a total [expletive deleted] who would stop at nothing."

YESTERDAY'S PUBLICATION of the Greater London Authority Bill reminds Pandora that Tony Banks, one of the front-runners for the job it will create - that of London Mayor - still hasn't called to say how pleased or displeased he is with a new volume listing his witticisms. Today's excerpt from Ian Dale's *The Wit and Wisdom of Tony Banks* has our hero reflecting on the Thatcher government's abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986: "Abolition was an act of political malice, carried out by probably the most vindictive, dogmatic, bigoted, authoritarian Prime Minister that this country has had to suffer since the days of the Duke of Wellington - linked together through 150 years only by their own personal arrogance. It is not my intention to refight the old battles, because I cheer myself up with the old saying: 'Don't get mad, get even.'"

US TALK-SHOW host and actress Rosie O'Donnell can now add her name to the list of Miami's celebrity inhabitants, having bought Madonna's mansion for \$6m on a little pre-Christmas shopping spree. Madonna was unhappy there because she apparently felt that she and her baby, Lourdes, were being treated like a tourist attraction. When O'Donnell was asked by reporters at the *New York Daily News* if she felt the same, she replied: "Not at all. People react differently to me. I go out shopping."

ACTRESS WHOOP! Goldberg (pictured) had guests at a New York charity dinner in stitches this week. At the dinner the irrepressible star told an amazed audience that Hillary Clinton had inadvertently received an invitation to the event that ended with the words, "you better be there, bitch." Luckily the First Lady was au fait with Goldberg's way, "I just thought that it was Whoopi being Whoopi," she said.



Don't let your children go to Narnia



PHILIP HENSHER
C S Lewis's books are racist and misogynist - but their worst crime is a lack of imagination

I'M CERTAINLY not in favour of banning or burning books, but there are a few books in this world which would make even the most fervent liberal twitch for a box of matches. For me, it is not the 120 *Days of Sodom* or *Mein Kampf* that marks the outer boundaries of acceptability, but something infinitely more poisonous and corrupting.

If I were going to look away a single thing in the private cabinets of the British Library, have a work of literature removed from the shelves of bookshops and schools everywhere, it would have to be something widely thought of as innocuous, and perhaps even beneficial. It looks like a fairy story about some nicely behaved children, a wicked witch or two and some talking animals, but it is the sheerest poison. Let us drop C S Lewis and his ghoulish, grizzly, half-witted, money-making drive about Narnia down the nearest deep hole, as soon as is conveniently possible.

In fact, I'd more or less assumed that these frightful books had stopped being read years ago. It turns out that this year marks Lewis's centenary and, to mark it,

the Royal Shakespeare Company, no less, is putting on what promises to be a spectacular stage production of the first book in the Narnia series, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Spectacular in setting, I presume, since nothing on earth could make the products of Lewis's mind intellectually spectacular, or even interesting. They are revoltingly mean-minded books, written

to corrupt the minds of the young with allegory, smugly denouncing anything that differs in the slightest respect from Lewis's creed of clean-living, muscular Christianity, pipe-smoking, misogyny, racism, and the most vulgar snobbery.

I think I knew there was something wrong with the books when I read them as a child. I couldn't have identified their blunt allegory (the Creation in *The Magician's Nephew*, the Crucifixion and Resurrection in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Armageddon in *The Last Battle*) but I knew that here were some books with some fairly unhealthy designs on me as a reader. All that guff about Deep Magic and Deeper Magic when that lion comes back from the dead struck me as cheating with the plot, and still makes no sense unless you import great loads of Christian doctrine into it. To be honest, I'm still pretty vague about a lot of Christian doctrine, which is probably why great swathes of the series make absolutely no sense to me at all. What on earth is *The Last Battle* going on about, with that donkey and Plato and the poor girl who gets sent to hell for wear-

ing nylons and lipstick? What is its doctrinaire bullying doing in a book for children, and why did people ever think of it as appropriate reading for the under-10s?

The books embody some pretty unpleasant social attitudes. The loathing of vegetarians, socialism, anti-smoking and "cleverness" is a recurrent theme; the racism is extreme, even by the standards of the time (you would probably gather from *A Horse and His Boy* and *The Last Battle* that Islam was some kind of Satanic cult). You just know that if Lewis were alive today, he would be writing idiotic, sniggering articles about "political correctness" for *The Daily Telegraph*. But I think the most corrupting feature of it all is the poverty of the imagination. It is often thought that these books are richly imaginative pieces of work. They are not: they are thin, doctrinaire tracts of social and religious instruction, which allow no dissent, and which embody only the bullying voice of their author.

Other books of the time look fairly dubious, if judged by contemporary standards. It's easy to have problems with the racial attitudes

of *The Lord of the Rings*, with those heroic, tall, blond Elves talking Welsh, and the ghastly dark, squat, hairy little Orcs with their Turkish consonants. But, to some extent, Tolkien is rescued by the variety of his imagination, and by a vision which, if it is not rich or profound, is at least intricately patterned and satisfying. Those Narnia books, instead, are second-hand, commonplace, and allegorical in the most boring way. They serve as vehicles for a narrow-minded man's pet obsessions, and, with their second-hand props of fauns and centaurs, can only make a child think that literature is something that can never be surprising.

Don't give your children C S Lewis to read: not the Narnia books, not the *Screwtape Letters*, not that appalling *Is God an Astronaut?* It looks like rich fantasy, but it is the product of a mean, narrow little mind, burrowing into their ideas and pooh-poohing them. Give them anything else - *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, a bottle of vodka, a phial of prussic acid, even *Winnie the Pooh* - but keep them away from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

Mr Blunkett's failure to stop the teaching brain drain



BETHAN MARSHALL
No one wants to be part of a profession where you are not trusted to do your job

TEACHERS ARE voting with their feet. Prospective teachers are voting with their feet, too. As with many in the public sector, teachers feel they are drowning in paper work and bureaucracy simply to prove that they are doing their job. What, they ask, is the point? Something has to change.

Labour's Green Paper, out yesterday, is meant to do just that. For the first time, a government has realised that teachers are the key to the education revolution and that, perhaps, simply nagging them will not help. More radically still, Labour has identified that there is a recruitment crisis in teaching, and that to solve it money must come into the equation. But here comes the rub. There is not enough money to pay for the badly needed across-the-board rise.

The Green Paper is a creative attempt to get around this problem under the guise of modernising the profession. It includes both performance related pay, and fast-tracking selected new recruits. The success of the measures will, to a large extent, depend on the numbers to whom they apply and whether enough believe it could be them.

Early indications are that Labour does intend performance related pay to apply to the majority of the profession. The same cannot be said of the other initiatives. Labour has already announced that maths and science teachers are to get £5,000 more on starting than their arts contemporaries. The small but elite group of super teachers, who can earn up to £40,000, are one term old. David Blunkett has pre-empted objections by coming out fighting. "I don't know a union worth its salt that would call its members out against a new pay award," he has warned. Characterising it as a union battle may enhance Blunkett's reputation

as a moderniser, but the issues at stake are not that simple. Of course, part of the problem is the old union adage that everyone should receive the same wage for the same job. But this is not just obstructive Old Labour talk. It is an issue identified by some of the more progressive thinkers in the private sector.

While Blunkett cites industry for performance related pay, many companies have turned their backs on it because they are focussing more attention on the employees' morale and workplace dynamics. The Government might be wise to do the same. Singling out individuals for special treatment is seen as counter-productive to the team spirit; dependence on the criteria for deciding who is to be rewarded, cramps initiative. While market forces do play their part, a similar point could be made about paying science graduates a third more on starting than arts graduates. It is a major disincentive to those hard-pressed teachers who believe their contribution to be less valued. Many of the arts PGCE students at King's College,

London, where I work, bitterly resent it. We cannot afford to be complacent about recruitment in this area either. English places are barely filled by the number of applicants.

Nor does the comparison with the civil service for fast tracking work that neatly. Not only are the overwhelming majority of teachers graduates anyway, a first class degree is not a necessary indicator of teaching ability. The current system of rapidly promoting talented, well qualified teachers seems more equitable. It just needs to be better paid. In addition, schools, particularly primary schools, are small institutions, often with only a dozen teachers. A sense of all being in it together is important to the ethos and the morale of the teachers.

It is this that Labour's Green Paper has singularly failed to address. The recruitment crisis and teacher morale are about more than just money, although this is important. What really lies at the heart of the problem, is something that bedevils the public sector in general - the balance between trust and accountability. Traditionally this has set the interests of the public and those involved in education in opposition. The Tories began it when they introduced a tranche of indicators by which those in the public sector might be assessed. In the case of schools, these included a national curriculum, a battery of tests which could be converted into league tables, and Ofsted. With its passion for numerical indicators, Labour does not appear set to buck this trend.

Indeed, it has already added base line testing; national and local target setting of exam results at 11 and 16; and the highly prescriptive literacy hour; to be followed next year by the numeracy hour (both of which, although in theory non-statutory, will be inspected by Ofsted). A



Time to let teachers contribute to education

national curriculum for teacher training, begun by the Tories, has been implemented by Labour the first time such legislation has been introduced into higher education. The much vaunted value added tables, which would, in theory, have shown that despite poor results some schools were doing a good job, have failed to materialise. All of these will stay.

Yet the brain drain from the profession is sufficient evidence that a radical re-think of public sector accountability will have to be made if we are to continue to raise standards within state education. For no one wants to be part of a profession where you are not trusted to do your job and need to be told what to do. The elusive promise that you, too, might be a super teacher, or find a meagre bonus in your pay packet will be insufficient to counter the clearer message that without government guidelines teachers are not quite up to the job.

We need to find measures which teachers feel they can contribute to

constructively; that will enhance their own professional life rather than simply be a check to see if they are doing their job. Too often, arguments about accountability have looked to the lowest common denominator to justify a system of punitive monitoring. Above all, we must allow those who are being held accountable to benefit from the system which is holding them to account. In case we forget, it is worth bearing in mind that it is not only teachers who might be affected by this Green Paper. Parents may quite justifiably demand that parent would not want their child to be taught by those that the system had identified as better than others? Why settle for the average when you could have the best? Perhaps trying to resolve that thorny little problem might encourage Labour to devise a creative solution that benefits everyone involved in education. Let's be genuinely progressive.

Bethan Marshall is lecturer of English education at King's College, London

Peace will be found in Ulster



PODIUM
GEORGE MITCHELL
The Richard Dimbleby Lecture, given by the former chairman of the Northern Ireland peace talks

IN THE past few months, I've often been asked what lessons Northern Ireland holds for other conflicts. I'll try to answer that question now.

I begin with caution. Each human being is unique, as is each society. It follows logically, then, that no two conflicts are the same. Much as we would like it, there is no magic formula which, once discovered, can be used to end all conflicts.

But there are certain principles which arise out of my experience in Northern Ireland that I believe are universal. First, I believe there's no such thing as a conflict that can't be ended. They're created and sustained by human beings. They can be ended by human beings. No matter how ancient the conflict, no matter how hateful, no matter how hurtful, peace can prevail.

When I arrived in Northern Ireland I found, to my dismay, a widespread feeling of pessimism among the public and the political leaders. It's a small, well informed society, where I quickly became well known. Every day people would stop me on the street, in the airport, in a restaurant.

They always began with kind words. "Thank you, Senator. God bless you." "We appreciate what you're trying to do." But they always ended in despair. "You're wasting your time." "This conflict can't be ended." "We've been killing each other for centuries and we're doomed to go on killing each other for ever."

As best I could, I worked to reverse such attitudes. This is the special responsibility of political leaders, from whom many in the public take their cue. Leaders must lead. And one way is to create an attitude of success; the belief that problems can be solved, that things can be better. Not in a foolish or unrealistic way, but in a way that creates hope and confidence among the people.

A second need is for a clear and determined policy not to yield to the men of violence. Over and over, they tried to destroy the peace process in Northern Ireland; at times they nearly succeeded.

Seeking an end to conflict is not for the timid or the tentative. It takes courage, perseverance and steady nerves in the face of violence. I believe it a mistake to say in advance

that if acts of violence occur, the negotiations will stop. That's an invitation to those who use violence to destroy the peace process, and it transfers control of the agenda from the peaceful majority to the violent minority.

A third need is a willingness to compromise. Peace and political stability cannot be achieved in sharply divided societies unless there is a genuine willingness to understand

the other point of view and to enter into principled compromise. That is easy to say, but very hard to do, because it requires of political leaders that they take risks for peace.

I know it can be done, because I saw it at first hand in Northern Ireland. Men and women, some of whom had never before met, never before spoken, who had spent their entire lives in conflict, came together in an agreement for peace. Admittedly, it was long and difficult. But it did happen.

A fourth principle is to recognise that the implementation of agreements is as difficult, and as important, as self-evident. That should be getting an agreement is so difficult that the natural tendency is to celebrate, then go home and relax. But as we are now seeing in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, in the Balkans, getting it done is often harder than agreeing to do it.

Once again, patience and perseverance are necessary. It is especially important that our citizens, British and American, both busy at home and all across the world, not be distracted, or be made complacent

by the good feeling created by a highly publicised agreement. If a conflict is important enough to get involved in, it must be seen through, all the way to a fair and successful conclusion.

There is uneasiness among some about the continuing release of prisoners. There will be further controversy when reports are received from the independent commission on policing and the criminal justice system. Policing is especially sensitive. Chris Patten and his colleagues on that commission have an important and difficult task.

It will take extraordinary determination and commitment to get safely through all of these problems. But I believe it can be done, and will be done. It would be an immense tragedy were the process to fall now. The people of Northern Ireland are sick of war. They're sick of so many funerals, especially those involving the small white coffins of children, prematurely laid into the rolling green fields of their beautiful countryside.

They want peace, and I hope they can keep it.

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سكرا من الاصل

Drawing false conclusions



**ANN
TRENEMAN**

Must we react to all news about men or women as if it were attached to a moral barometer?

I HAVE long believed that listening to Radio 4's *Today* programme is bad for my health. I cannot tell you the number of times I have gone to sleep thinking that I was OK, only to be woken up by a perfect stranger telling me otherwise.

The reason? Well, in the worst cases it is the fact that I am a woman. This is depressing, because there is no real cure.

The list of worrying things is long, and growing. I can think of alcohol, smoking, chocolate, red meat, white meat, pink meat, eggs, butter, coffee and, oh yes, housework. But what makes a story even better is if there is a gender angle. So, not just a chocolate story, but a chocolate story that pertains specially to women. It may be 1998 but we still cannot get over the fact that men and women react differently to certain things, be they a Toblerone bar, a toilet that needs cleaning or a glass of wine.

Sometimes such stories do little more than entertain. But this week we have had one of those that frighten instead. This was the study showing that women are more likely than men to develop the most dangerous form of lung cancer. Evidently, nearly twice as many women as men under 65 are diagnosed with small-cell lung cancer, and this is inoperable in seven out of 10 cases. We know what that means. That means death.

What is a woman to make of this? Why is this the case? "The short answer is, we don't know. There are theories," says a spokesman for the group that conducted the study, the British Thoracic Society. Possible reasons include genetic susceptibility, the brands that women tend to smoke (Dor and "lite") and the way that women inhale. Apparently, we take shorter, sharper intakes, probably in a desperate attempt to get some nicotine and tar out of those life brands. "Or," he says, "it could be any combination or perhaps all three."

The spokesman said that it was intellectually interesting to want to know why, but it missed the main point. Which is? "Worrying, smoking in teenage girls is on the increase," said Dr Mike Pearson of the Society. "It is vitally important that young women know the greater



Marlene Dietrich in the days when a woman smoking a cigarette - once the preserve of men - was considered to be sexy, not deadly

risks they are running by smoking. We must prevent them from becoming the lung-cancer victims of the future."

Now, I am not going to try to argue that we need more lung-cancer victims. I liked smoking, but can see that it wasn't the smartest thing to take up at the age of 16. I wouldn't want my 16-year-old daughter, or anyone else's for that matter, to start smoking now. In fact, I wouldn't want any 16-year-old boy to smoke, either. The reason? Because lung cancer is a major cause of death for men and was responsible for the deaths of 24,000 men in 1994. And that is twice as many as in women. So, yes, we should take note of this study, but by no means is it the whole picture. And I don't believe that it will scare one girl into not smoking.

If this sounds familiar, that's because it is. Earlier this year, I had been woken to discover that women who drink three glasses of wine per day are 41 per cent more likely to contract breast cancer than those who are teetotal. You can imagine

the relief to discover that the risk starts to drop again if you drink seven glasses a day. So is it better to be drunk all the time, or to be only slightly drunk but at risk of breast cancer? It is the kind of question that is impossible to answer, but that didn't stop some from deciding that the gender sex shouldn't really drink at all. "Not many women can hold their drink," announced one newspaper article. "When they have had a few, their laughs become loud and brittle and their mouths appallingly wide."

Over the past few years, there has been a steady stream of stories that highlight the point that women competing in a men's world are simply going to die sooner and more painfully. And bald too, evidently. This is because there is a theory - note that word - that women in high-stress jobs experience a hormonal change that can result in male-pattern baldness. Never mind that this theory does not hold up to scrutiny. It still made the headlines.

It's funny what does. Remember

the fuss about boys performing badly in school? "Caught in the gender gap," said the headlines, as we all worried about how to make boys do better. In some cases, the news was accompanied by jolly little lists. "It's not all bad news, chaps... There are a few things that men, as they grow up, go on to do much, much better than women," said a headline in *The Observer*. These include belching, remembering dull trivia, reversing into parking spaces and reading maps. Odd, isn't it, that they shouldn't have added: performance at university level, and earning-power after university. Women in full-time employment are still earning just 72 per cent of a man's wage. Now there's an interesting statistic.

Barely had I controlled my anxiety about boys performing badly than I had another set of headlines to worry over. These were about girls performing badly. The Women's Unit says that it is going to find out why girls often don't live up to their potential and fall behind boys at university, or drop out as

teenagers. Interestingly, none of these stories was accompanied by a list of a few things that women, as they grow up, go on to do much better than men.

It is time to get a grip, and to realise what is going on here. All of this is connected, in some way, with our obsession with the differences between the sexes. In many cases this is not based on any real curiosity about what is different about men and women, but on a desire somehow to make points and turn back the clock in what some insist on calling "the sex war". But clocks do not go back.

Make no mistake: we are in the middle of a revolution. I know this not from any study or politician's speech but because that is what is reflected in life. The school gate used to be a mothers-only zone. Now there are lots of dads, too. The same thing, in reverse, is going on in the workplace. Put simply, more women are working, more men are caring for children. It makes sense that more women will drink and smoke and suffer from stress-

related illnesses. It also follows that more men will react to their new roles by suffering from depression and low self-esteem.

What doesn't follow is that women are becoming men, or vice versa. Nor should we see either as needing to be punished for their behaviour. We are not going simply to exchange places; we are going to mutate. It's called evolution. While we may not know how things are going to change, we must stop reacting to every piece of news about men or women as if it were attached to a moral barometer.

In the meantime, however, there is the problem of the *Today* programme. Can such a level of stress before breakfast be good for our health? Perhaps someone should commission a study on this. But then I realised that I needed to get the whole thing into perspective. After all, as a woman I will live longer than most men anyway. I should die at 79, while they will die at 74. Which is worrying, but only if you are a man. Why does that make me feel better?

RIGHT OF REPLY

HEATHER HALLETT



The Chairman of the Bar Council replies to a leading article calling for legal deregulation

THE SUGGESTION that the world would be a better place if only there were more lawyers would make most people laugh, and I must admit that it causes me to sigh with disbelief, too.

But *The Independent's* honest suggestion in its leading article yesterday was that increasing lawyer numbers is the way to depress market prices for access to the law, and thereby enable the world and her husband to have their day in court.

A \$10 a case public defence lawyer in the US is a lawyer who falls asleep on the job, insults his client and colludes with the prosecution to get a quick result. The evidence for this is chilling.

The fact is that the Law Society's own figures suggest solicitors' firms doing legal aid will be cut from 11,000 to 3,000 under the Irvine reforms.

Doom merchants have also suggested that the Bar will be cut in half as a result. We shall see. I believe that the public will demand good lawyers.

Most of us go to law only once or twice in our lives. We want our house purchase to be copper-bottomed, and our defence in court to be rock solid. No one benefits from being represented by a second-rate lawyer.

There has been lots of loose talk in the press about strangle-holds, monopolies and restrictive practices. But the fact is that the Bar is subject to competition from solicitor-advocates, whose standards are set by the Law Society. We are relaxed about competition. We are also keen to compete on price - the fees of an average barrister are well below those of a solicitor because of lower overheads.

But we shall not lower our professional standards, which are required in the public interest - that should be the primary purpose of professional self-regulation.

Becoming the best of enemies

FRIENDS SHOULD be the last people to let you down. Famously, Paul Theroux feels sorely rejected by his old companion Naipaul (or V S Naipaul, as he now refers to the writer). At the end of a 30-year friendship, Theroux wants payback. So here it is: *Sir Vidia's Shadow*, a fillee's revenge. V S Naipaul, V S Nye-Powell: Theroux has fun with names, but humour is not the point of this wounded, self-pitying memoir.

On the page, Naipaul is an improbably unsavoury creature. His disdain for black writers, white liberals and what he calls "infies" (inferior types) is quite comic. Much of his arrogance is mere pompous la-di-da. But Theroux has an agenda: wherever possible, he turns a buffoon into a vicious, diabolical homicidist.

The authors first met in Kampala, Uganda, in 1966. Theroux, then 24, was teaching at Makerere University. Naipaul was 10 years older and already the world's most famous West Indian writer. He quickly became an important mentor and influence on Theroux. One of Theroux's best stories, "Sinning with Annie", sparkles in imitation of Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur*. Yet, where Naipaul describes cultural dislocation with a real sense of mystery and pain, Theroux has mustered only a tepid sense of his own rootlessness and exile from America.



FRIDAY BOOK

SIR VIDIA'S SHADOW: A FRIENDSHIP ACROSS THE CONTINENTS
BY PAUL THEROUX, HAMISH HAMILTON, £17.99

Is Theroux jealous? None of his work approaches Naipaul's *A House for Mr Bisswas* for delicious pessimism and subtle irony. Theroux ridicules Naipaul and makes a meal of his fastidious distaste for African culture. "You see? Even here. Bongo drums!" Naipaul joshes in Uganda. Born in Trinidad to an upper-caste Brahmin family, Naipaul apparently views Africans as speechless waiting to be civilised. Yet how much of his condescending regality was an act?

In *The Mystic Masseur*, Naipaul was withering about Indians who emulate white ways. The novel's failed Trinidad schoolteacher, Pundit Ganesh, reinvents himself as G Ramsay Muir Esq. MA, a puffed-up fraud. Theroux suggests that, with age and success, his friend has turned white inside his dark skin. Naipaul has become, to use the unpleasant expression, a Bounty bar. A fully-fledged member of the

British Establishment. Sir Vidia resembles the Ramsay Muir he once despised.

Naipaul has often been attacked for betraying his Caribbean heritage. "Naipaul's a very conservative kind of guy," the West Indian writer George Lamming once told me. Lamming's Afroed hair and rootsy, tropical ease made Naipaul wince. A Brahmin is never ambushed by West Indian sensuality. In one book, Naipaul claims to "detest" calypso culture and steel bands. Yet, on safari with Theroux in Rwanda, he speaks glowingly of the Trinidadian calypso singers Mighty Sparrow and Lord Invader. So where does the truth lie?

Theroux himself is not so mindful of the facts, as *Sir Vidia's Shadow* has its own inaccuracies. George Lamming is not from Trinidad, but Barbados. B S Johnson's experimental novel-in-a-box was not called *Trawl* (it was *The Unfortunates*). Johnson, an irreverent spirit, regarded Naipaul as "a prick". Now, 25 years later, Theroux goes further. Naipaul is a misogynist, a frequenter of prostitutes, a food snob, a scrounger, a fanatical time-keeper, a palmistry freak. V S Nipple may know his wines, says Theroux, but he's still a jumped-up babu shopkeeper.

In truth, *Sir Vidia's Shadow* is a posh kiss-and-tell of the sort regularly churned out by celebrities. Usually these include prurient sexual revelations and divorce settlement details. So we learn that Theroux was turned on by Naipaul's long-suffering wife Patsy ("her weeping made me want to hold her and fondle her breasts"). This put some strain on the writer's friendship, though we are not told why they eventually split up.

Theroux is never so crass as when writing about women. At a lunch given by Naipaul he fantasises about Antonia Fraser. ("I wanted to clutch her shepherdess costume," he says in full confessional mode.) Theroux's undistinguished prose had the undesired effect of sending me



V S Naipaul, as Paul Theroux would have it

right back to Naipaul. Theroux tells us: "Friendship arises less from an admiring love and strength than a sense of gentleness, a suspicion of weakness". What does that mean? Honed to a laconic flatness, the Naipaul sentence is a stringent antidote to this sort of vapid impressionism.

While he is quick to condemn an old friend's snobbery, Theroux never investigates his own patronising contempt for foreign culture. Naipaul views the world from a patrician, Brahmin vantage; Theroux, from a preppy, American point of view. At one point, Theroux talks about the "pissing, monkey-eating" Bachinga tribe of Africa. This is the authentic, superior Theroux tone. So who is the more narrow author - Theroux or Naipaul?

Theroux made his name by travelling round the world on steam trains and then telling us about it. *Sir Vidia's Shadow* is a voyeuristic trip into the private lives of two famous writers. While Theroux offers the occasional insight into the nature of friendship, this book smacks more of pique and vengeance. The question is: will Naipaul stoop to retaliate? I suspect he has too much dignity.

IAN THOMSON

The cost of living goes up at Christmas

Do we mean mince pies, turkey and presents? Not exactly. We mean physically staying alive.

Below 3°C, living on the streets becomes intolerable. Without proper food, the body can't keep warm. Without warm shelter, beautiful starlit nights can literally kill you.

Kathy doesn't want a white Christmas. If it snows while she sleeps, she might not wake up. We'd like to give Kathy shelter this winter and, more important, a real chance to rebuild her life and find a permanent home.

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FRIDAY POEM

CHET BAKER
BY JOHN HARVEY

looks out from his hotel room across the Amstel to the girl cycling by the canal who lifts her hand and waves and when she smiles he is back in times when every Hollywood producer wanted to turn his life into that bitter-sweet story where he falls badly, but only in love with Pier Angeli.

Carol Lynley, Natalie Wood; that day he strolled into the studio, fall of fifty-two, and played those perfect lines across the chords of *My Funny Valentine* - and now when he looks up from his window and her passing smile into the blue of a perfect sky he knows this is one of those rare days when he can truly fly.

This poem comes from John Harvey's new collection, *'Bluer Than This'*, published by Smith/Doorstop Books (£5.95)

6/OBITUARIES

Freddie Young

THE WORLD'S greatest cameraman, by general consent, and winner of no less than three Academy Awards, Freddie Young was one of the last links with the silent era. He had the longest career of any cameraman.

He was born in 1902, and lived in Shepherd's Bush. As a boy, he was fascinated by films, and he and his brother Bill went to the cinema at least twice a week. His favourite actress was Mary Pickford – probably because of the exquisite lighting she received from the cinematographer Charles Rosher.

He also went regularly to the Lime Grove swimming baths. Opposite was a vast greenhouse of a building which aroused Freddie's curiosity. He was told it was a film studio. He thought how marvellous it would be to work in such a romantic place, and he knocked on the door. He was very surprised to be taken on at once. It was 1917, and most of the workers had gone to France. Freddie himself, at 14 too young to join up, had been doing war work, drilling hand grenades in a munition factory – a job he hated, and which he quickly abandoned.

His first position at the Gaumont Studio, Lime Grove (later occupied by the BBC) was in the laboratory, the best possible training for a cameraman. A year later, he was left entirely in charge of the lab, and he was able to experiment with tinting and toning. By 1919 he was lab manager, and when Gaumont closed the lab he was made assistant cameraman – he did "all the jobs nobody else felt like doing".

He drove the studio car, took the stills, projected the rushes and even cut the film – in addition to helping the cameraman six days a week and often Sundays as well. During the making of features like *Rob Roy* (1922), he volunteered to do dangerous stunts – falling 50 feet for instance, from a castle wall into a sheet which looked like the size of a pocket-handkerchief, held by members of the crew. The director, William Kellino, rewarded him with 10 shillings.

Young was as handsome as any leading man and as a young man he looked like a tougher version of Ivor Novello. He doubled Novello in *Triumph of the Rat* (1926), dodging

through the Paris traffic so the company wouldn't have to risk their expensive star.

During the Twenties his most ambitious film would have been a version of *Laurence of Arabia* which M.A. Wetherell was planning in 1927, but which fell through. However, he had already been on a location trip to the Egyptian desert for *Fires of Fate* (1923) – and he was present when Howard Carter uncovered Tutankhamun's tomb. Back in England, he did a lot of newsreel work and he photographed an elaborate recreation of the Somme in documentary style as well as a feature film set in the last weeks of the Great War, *Victory* (1927).

During the making of *Victory*, Young married Marjorie Gaffney, an assistant director with Victor Seville and Alfred Hitchcock. He worked for Hitchcock on *Blackmail* (1929), doing the elaborate series of dissolves (in the camera) for the montage which opens the picture.

No shot in his career aroused so much comment as the scene when Omar Sharif emerged from a mirage

Blackmail is famous for being the first British talkie. Young had, however, already converted a silent into a talkie – *White Cargo* (1929), using a hastily converted studio at Elstree. He had to work incredibly hard – 72 hours non-stop – under miserably hot conditions so that carpenters could come in and start building the sets for Hitchcock's picture.

Young subsequently joined Herbert Wilcox. He worked out a system of multiple cameras, rather like the technique used in television, and could complete a talkie in a couple of weeks. He and Wilcox formed a partnership which was to result in



Young (right) with David Lean on the set of *Laurence of Arabia* (1962). Lean directed it, and Young was the cinematographer

some memorable pictures. *Good-night Vienna* (1932), for instance, made a star of Anna Neagle (and Wilcox married her). During the Thirties, Young trained many of the men who would become the great cameramen of the future – such as Jack Cardiff and Freddie Francis.

He first met the director David Lean on *Major Barbara* (1941), adapted from the play by Shaw, which was supposed to be directed by Gabriel Pascal. In fact Lean and Harold French were doing the directing and when Lean gave Freddie some terse instructions, Young replied "Don't teach your grand-

mother to suck eggs." This stuck in Lean's memory, and years later he was unwilling to use Young for *Laurence of Arabia*. When he bowed to the inevitable, however, Young arrived on the location, marched up to Lean and said "Don't teach your grandmother to suck eggs."

By this time, Freddie Young had had a far more adventurous life even than David Lean. He had been back to the desert again, directing the second unit on *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1945) – shooting the Egyptian army for Pascal – and had crossed the U-boats-infested Atlantic to film Michael Powell's *49th Parallel* (1941) in Cana-

da. He spent four months there, travelling 20,000 miles. He was commissioned into the Army Film Production Unit and was blown up by a phosphorus bomb. He spent 15 years at MGM – making pictures like *Joan of Arc* (1955), for which he was nominated for an Oscar, and *Mogambo* (1953) for John Ford – and was a stern disciplinarian.

Often during the shooting of *Laurence of Arabia* he had to drive Lean – lost in thought in his beloved desert – back to the camera. He was nearly 60, but displayed ferocious energy. The company saw virtually no rushes in the desert and the impact

of Young's work when they eventually saw it in London was stunning. No shot in his entire career aroused so much comment as the scene when Omar Sharif emerged from a mirage – achieved with a unique telephoto lens he had had the foresight to bring with him from Panavision in America.

David Lean and Freddie Young formed a partnership. "He gives you an inspiration," said Young, "so you go out of your depth and try and do something extraordinary." Lean knew there was no need to hover at Young's shoulder. As he wrote to him, years later:

For the most part I will give you a set-up, fiddle around with the props, talk to the actors and go and have a cup of tea. I know a bit about lenses, consider myself rather bright about composition and, at a pinch, make a suggestion or minor criticism about lighting – but on the whole you're a lonely man left to your own devices.

Lean was being modest – he had a passionate concern for the visuals – but he knew that Freddie Young, of all cameramen, was equally passionate. He used him on *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Young's favourite film* and *Ryan's Daughter* (1970) and Young won an Oscar on each. He also photographed *Lord Jim* (1965) for Richard Brooks, with Peter O'Toole, *The Battle of Britain* (1969), and *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971) for which he was again nominated for an Academy Award.

I first met Freddie Young when he was working on *You Only Live Twice* in 1967. I was amazed that in the midst of terrific pressure on a colossal production (Ken Adam's set alone cost \$1m) he took the time to answer my questions with immense enthusiasm and friendliness. And he continued to do the same throughout the years, helping immeasurably with my biography of David Lean and a television series on the European silent film, *Cinema Europe*. I never met his first wife, who died in 1964, but Joan, a remarkable woman and his second wife, was absolutely devoted to him, as was his son David, and they were both with him at the end.

In his fascinating memoirs (which Faber will publish next year), Freddie Young concludes his story with his one directorial effort, *Arthur's Hallowed Ground*, which he made for television in 1985. And he added a note, in his own hand: "Mind you, I'm 88 years old now and I spend most of my time painting, and I enjoy that enormously. I'm creating pictures with a paintbrush with nobody to interfere with my work. It's marvellous."

KEVIN BROWNLOW

Frederick Archibald Young: born London 9 October 1902; OBE 1970; married 1927 Marjorie Gaffney (died 1964); one adopted son, one adopted daughter; 1965 Joan Murdoch (one son); died London 1 December 1998.

Christopher Dow

CHRISTOPHER DOW was one of the most distinguished applied economists of our time. His career spanned the whole post-war period: from 1945, when he joined the Treasury, right up to last month when he was putting the finishing touches to his final book which is to be published next month.

He worked in four institutions at the heart of macro-economic research, advice and policy-making: the British Treasury, the Bank of England, the OECD in Paris and the National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR), and was prolific and pervasively influential in all of them.

One could always recognise a Dow paper by the invisibility of its style. There were not only – of course – no clichés, infelicities or obscurities; there were no elegant turns of phrase either. There was nothing but the exposition or the argument. It was almost as if one wasn't reading at all.

Dow dealt with complicated questions, where evidence is always partial, theories are very difficult to test and value judgements lurk in the most apparently banal propositions. It was a pleasure to have such matters simplified and clarified by a man who knew that at bottom none of them were in the least simple or clear. It must be said that it could also be frustrating to anyone (which includes most of us at one time or other) who wanted more than the known facts or theories would justify. He refused to do the reader's work for him.

His deep fastidiousness of mind, combined with a somewhat reticent and understated manner probably meant that his contributions to eco-

nomics policy and understanding were not as widely recognised as they should have been, especially by those of a dogmatic or superficial turn of mind. A horde of such people stormed the citadels of economic power in the late Seventies and early Eighties under the banner of monetarism – a theory that held that all one had to do to cure inflation was to control the growth of the quantity of money. Those who, like Dow, believed that it was much more difficult and complicated than that, were apt to be dismissed as fuddy duddy and obstructionist. But he had the last laugh. His book, written jointly with

One could always recognise a Dow paper by the invisibility of its style. It was almost as if one wasn't reading at all

Iain Saville, *A Critique of Monetary Policy: theory and British experience* (1988) was devastating in its reasoned demolition of monetarism. Delay in its publication and the unexcitingly careful nature of its conclusions muted its public impact. But its arguments had been well rehearsed in official circles before publication and are in great measure embodied in the current Bank of England approach to monetary policy.

Dow was born in 1916 and educated at Brighton, Hove and Sussex Grammar School and University College London (of which he became a Fellow in 1973). He served in the Royal Air Force in the Second World

War and began his professional career in 1945, when he joined the Treasury as an Economic Adviser.

For the next nine years he worked in the Economic Section of the Treasury, a small unit of professional economists – for many years there were no more than a dozen – who aimed to bring economic thinking and methods of analysis into a distinctly unregenerate and seat-of-the-pants institution. In 1954, with the strong support of Sir Robert Hall, then Head of the Economic Section, Dow moved to the NIESR.

Up to this time the NIESR had been somewhat of a backwater. The

conversion to Catholicism, both of which proved deeply enduring.

Then, after a brief return to the Treasury the Dows left for Paris for 10 years at the OECD, where Dow was Assistant Secretary-General. These were probably the happiest days of his life. Professionally, he presided over a large expert multinational staff and had no shortage of challenges to meet. He was at the centre of international economic affairs over a period which began with the high noon of the Bretton Woods system, saw its slow painful break-up and final collapse and ended with the catastrophic quintupling of oil prices.

Personally, the Dows were able to live in some style in a city they found very sympathetic. Dow always had a love for France and all things French. For many years the family took their annual holiday near Montclair. He had a wide knowledge and a deep love of French literature and he liked what he saw as the French guilt-free attitude towards life.

Towards the end of his time in Paris, he was asked if he would let his name go forward as a candidate for a chair in economics at Oxford. He did so and was duly appointed. But Leslie O'Brien, then Governor of the Bank of England, and needing someone as Economics Director of the Bank, persuaded Dow that his talents would be better employed, and that he would be happier, if he did not leave the official sector for academia. Oxford's loss was the Bank of England's gain. O'Brien did not personally benefit from his inspired recruitment as he retired almost at the moment Dow arrived. But for the next 11 years – until his 65th birthday in 1981 as Executive Director and thereafter as



Adviser – Dow worked as a close confidante to the next Governor, Gordon (now Lord) Richardson.

It was a partnership that worked wonderfully. Richardson, a subtle man, but not a professional economist, appreciated the distinction of Dow's mind and came to value his judgement on economic questions and to enjoy his contributions to the

Bank's debates over a wide area. For his part Dow, by judicious recruitment of outside talent and encouragement of that talent, enormously raised the standing and reputation of the Bank's economic department, provoking in due course a healthy jealous response in the Treasury.

Finally, having reached an age beyond that which most bureaucracies

do not allow even the grandest to remain, Dow left the Bank to return after a busy 22 years to the NIESR, this time as a Visiting Fellow. Actually, he visited more frequently than that title usually implies: four or five days a week right up to his death in his 82nd year. And at a time when others garden or play golf or read, other men's books, he set to and produced two major works of his own: the critique of monetary theory and a highly original book (about to be published) on the recessions the UK has experienced since the First World War, seeking to see what we can learn from both their similarities and their differences.

Dow's achievements were recognised by a Fellowship of the British Academy in 1982, but not – scandalously one might think – by any appearance in the Honours List.

Like any serious person, Christopher Dow cannot be defined by his professional interests and achievements. The importance of his family and religion to him has already been mentioned. In addition he derived a nourishment from all the arts. Painting in particular, which he practised in a modest but serious way, meant a great deal to him.

KIT MCMAHON

John Christopher Roderrick Dow, economist: born Harrogate, North Yorkshire 23 February 1916; Assistant Secretary-General, OECD, Paris 1963-73; Executive Director, Bank of England 1973-81; Advisor to the Governor of the Bank of England 1981-84; FBA 1982; Visiting Fellow, NIESR 1984-98; married 1960 Clare Keegan (one son, three daughters); died London 1 December 1998.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Brendan Jackson



Jackson in 1963, the year he ejected from a V-bomber

TWO ATTRIBUTES distinguished Brendan Jackson from his fellow Members of the Air Force Board: he was a qualified interpreter, speaking fluent German and French and with a BA degree in modern Japanese; and he had successfully ejected from a V-bomber.

This ejection occurred when he was flying as co-pilot in a Victor B.2 of No 100 Squadron, XM714, which took off from Wittering on a night training exercise on 20 March 1963. Shortly after getting airborne, at about 800ft, an emergency occurred which made it uncontrollable and the captain ordered Flt Lt Jackson to eject. The Victor came down at Bar-

nack, about eight miles north-northeast of Wittering, with the loss of the other five crew members.

Jackson had joined the RAF in 1956 on a National Service commission after graduating at London University – Air Ministry policy in those days being to encourage graduate entrants who, when they became senior officers, could talk on equal terms with their top contemporaries in governing, legal or industrial circles.

He was posted to No 100 Squadron – which was due to be equipped to carry Blue Steel air-to-surface nuclear missiles – in June 1962, having previously had jet-flying experience on Canberras, with No 31 Squadron,

based at Laarbruch in Germany with a reconnaissance role in the 2nd Tactical Air Force. His tour with the V-bomber force had begun at the end of 1961, with conversion to Victors at No 232 OCU at Gaydon, and by the end of his service with No 100 Squadron – on which he was already being recognised as a high flyer in RAF career terms – he was a Flight Commander with the rank of Squadron Leader.

He was posted to attend the Staff College at Andover in 1966 and then – after doing a re-conversion course on Canberras at No 231 OCU – given his first squadron command, of No 13 Sqn, which operated PR

Canberras from Luqa, Malta, in a reconnaissance role. Then in 1969 he returned to Germany as Personal Staff Officer (PSO) to the Chief of Staff at No 2 ATAF Headquarters.

By now a Wing Commander, his experience widened still further with an exchange posting in 1972 to the US Armed Forces Staff College – during which he had the opportunity of flying B-52 strategic bombers; then in 1974-76 he held a key and demanding appointment, of PSO to the Chief of the Air Staff.

A Group Captain from 1977, he was given command of a V-force station, Marham, which had two squadrons of Victor K.2 tankers – on

which he had done a conversion course. After two years in this post his future lay with increasingly senior appointments – at the Air Ministry and at Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE): he was successfully Director of Air Staff Plans (with promotion to Air Commodore in 1980 and Air Vice-Marshal by 1984), then Assistant Chief of Staff (Policy) at SHAPE.

His career encompassed Command experience when in 1986 he was appointed Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander-in-Chief at Strike Command; then in 1988 he joined the Air Force Board as Air Member for Supply and Organisation (AMSO), being

promoted to Air Chief Marshal in 1990. But, sadly, an increasingly debilitating illness brought his RAF career to a close: he took premature retirement on medical grounds; 4 November 1993 was his last day of service.

HUMPHREY WYNN

Brendan James Jackson, air force officer: born London 23 August 1935; Assistant Chief of Staff (policy), SHAPE 1984-86; Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Strike Command 1986-88; KCB 1987; AMSO 1988-90; CCB 1992; married 1959 Shirley Norris (one son, one daughter); died Shouldham Thorpe, Norfolk 19 November 1998.

John Chadwick

RECEIVED a note in the post this morning about a new tablet from Pylos. I'll write it up on the board for you. This typical start to a Cambridge University lecture on Mycenaean Greek gives some idea of the excitement of John Chadwick's lectures in the heady years following the discovery that the puzzling symbols on small clay tablets from Crete and mainland Greece dating from the second millennium BC were hiding a form of early Greek.

Chadwick's role in Mycenaean studies was a major one. Linear B - as the once unknown script was originally labelled - was initially deciphered by an architect, Michael Ventris, who in a BBC programme in 1952 suggested that Linear B was Greek.

Chadwick had recently been appointed to a lectureship in Classics at Cambridge, and was busy writing lectures. But after hearing Ventris's broadcast, he checked out the proposed solution with his usual thoroughness and caution. He realised after four days' work that Ventris was probably right. He then wrote - with typical modesty - to offer his services as a "mere philologist".

Ventris accepted gratefully. Chadwick's close collaboration with him lasted until 1956, when Ventris was suddenly killed, aged 34, in a road accident.

With Ventris, Chadwick published an account of the decipherment, "Evidence for Greek Dialect in the Mycenaean Archives" (1953) which broke Hellenic Society records when 1,000 offprints requests were received. This was followed by *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (1956), an account of the Mycenaean writing system and language, together with a transcription and translation of 300 tablets from Knossos, Pylos and Mycenae. This has deservedly become a classic.

Chadwick was born in 1920 and educated at St Paul's School, then at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. In the Second World War, he was involved in cryptography. His first academic post was as a lexicographer on the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, and he retained a lifelong interest in lexicography: he compiled a lexicon of Swedenborg's Neo-Latin, and his latest book was entitled *Lexicographica Graeca* (1996). At Cambridge, he lectured in Classics from 1952, and was a Fellow of Downing College from 1960. He was the Perceval Maitland Laurence Reader in Classics 1969-84.

He lectured clearly and competently on all Greek dialects. But his work on Mycenaean is his major legacy to the

Classical world, and a final volume of the *Corpus of Mycenaean Inscriptions from Knossos* (a collaborative effort led by him) will be published next year.

Chadwick was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1967, and was much in demand at international conferences. He received numerous honours from universities abroad: fittingly, his main recreation, he claimed, was "travel". Even after his retirement he continued working hard, and was recently (in October this year) given a major international award, the Italian Feltrinelli Prize of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.

He was an exceptionally lucid and coherent lecturer, though he avoided eye contact with his audience, partly out of shyness, partly because the detailed "meatiness" of his lectures required attention to notes. Yet he was able to write and broadcast at a more popular level: *The Decipherment of Linear B* (1958), *The Mycenaean World* (1976) and *Linear B and Related Scripts* (1987) provided lucid, well-written surveys for non-specialists, and these works have been translated into numerous languages.

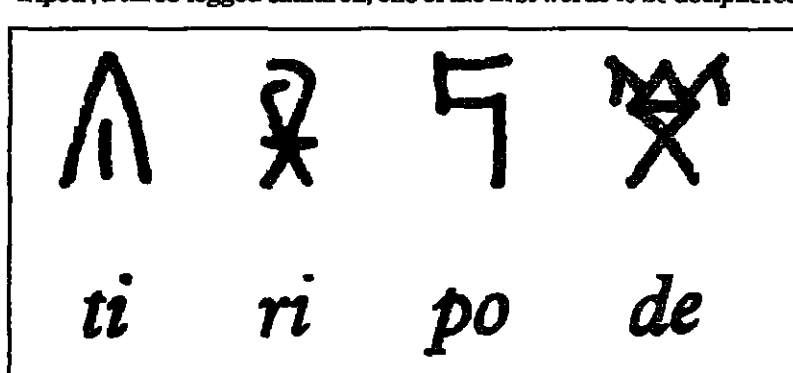
He had a good sense of humour, and showed a lighter side to those who knew him. Some traces of this came across in his work, as in a light-hearted evening talk on ancient Greek food and wine: if a mouse was found floating in a vat of wine, it had to be cremated, then the ashes scattered in the vat to purify it, we were told. His books also showed some hints of this quiet sense of humour: "we suspect something has gone wrong here," he commented when a potential translator of an inscription from Crete suggested including the line: "supreme - of the eggs the white".

John Chadwick was a warm-hearted person, who took great pains with his students, whether at undergraduate or research level. I remember him patiently and thoroughly going over points of detail when, as a student, I questioned him about a lecture I had missed. As a young researcher, I asked his advice about research topics: he talked through various possibilities at times when (I now realise) he must have been very busy.

He remained in touch with many of his old students - and they with him. He usually responded by return of post if, in later years, I wrote and asked his advice or opinion about any point of language. We once had a correspondence about whether "different from" in English was based on Latin, for example. When I was appointed to my current Oxford post, he gave me his Oxford gown, a typically generous gesture. His warm-hearted kindness will long be remembered by those who knew him.



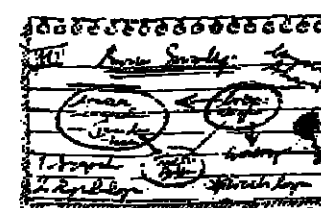
Chadwick (above) discovered, with Michael Ventris, that symbols on ancient clay tablets found in Crete and Greece hid a form of early Greek, labelled "Linear B". The sequence below (with phonetic values) denotes "tripod", a three-legged cauldron, one of the first words to be deciphered



Classics, Cambridge University 1952-54. Lecturer in Classics 1954-66. Reader in Greek Language 1966-69. Perceval Maitland Laurence Reader in Classics 1969-84 (Emeritus); Collins Fellow, Downing College, Cambridge 1960-84. Honorary Fellow 1984-95; FBA 1967; married 1947 Joan Hill (one son); died 24 November 1998.

JEAN ATTCHISON
John Chadwick, classical scholar: born 21 May 1920; Editorial Assistant, Oxford Latin Dictionary, Clarendon Press 1946-52; Assistant Lecturer in

Classics, Cambridge University 1952-54. Lecturer in Classics 1954-66. Reader in Greek Language 1966-69. Perceval Maitland Laurence Reader in Classics 1969-84 (Emeritus); Collins Fellow, Downing College, Cambridge 1960-84. Honorary Fellow 1984-95; FBA 1967; married 1947 Joan Hill (one son); died 24 November 1998.



NEUROLOGICAL NOTES

RITA CARTER

What Gage's accident did to his brain

IN THE summer of 1848, the Rutland and Burlington Railroad was blasting through rocky terrain to lay a new line across Vermont. Phineas Gage was the foreman of the leading gang, and as such he supervised the numerous controlled explosions that were being made to level the ground. He was perfectly fitted for this responsible task but one hot afternoon he made a momentary error which was to change his life in a peculiarly fundamental way.

Gage had just filled a cavity with explosive and was tamping it down prior to detonation with a heavy metal bar - three-and-a-half feet long, and nearly two inches across. As he did this someone called to him: he turned to see who it was - and the tamping iron struck the rock and sent a premature spark into the powder. The force of the resulting explosion jettisoned the tamping iron a clear 100 feet. En route it passed through Gage's head.

The iron entered Gage's left eye socket, continued at a slight angle through the frontal lobes of his brain and out through the top of his skull. Astonishingly he did not even pass out. And despite the hole in his head, through which his brain could be seen pulsating, Gage sat upright in an ox-cart and talked quite animatedly while he was taken to a nearby hotel to be treated by a local doctor. His

cheerful indifference to his plight was probably the first sign of the extraordinary character changes that were to come.

Despite losing a great chunk of brain, Gage seemed at first to have got off lightly. He lost sight in his left eye but his speech, movement, memory and other functions were unimpaired. However, as he got better those around him found he had changed dramatically in terms of behaviour and personality. The old Gage was known as shrewd, sensible, polite, restrained and industrious. The new Gage, according to John Harlow, a physician who made a detailed report of the case, was "fitful, irreverent... manifesting but little deference for his fellows, impatient of restraint or advice... pertinaciously obstinate, yet capricious and vacillating... a child in his intellectual capacity... [but with] the animal passions of a strong man." Harlow noted that Gage was far from making plans, and then discarding them, and was given to outbursts of bad temper and swearing such that "ladies were advised not to stay long in his presence".

Gage's life went into rapid decline. His employers would not have him back because he was so unreliable, and he was sacked or walked out of every other job he tried. The brain injury finally killed him in 1861 when he suffered a massive epileptic fit from

which he never regained consciousness. There was no autopsy and Gage was buried in the normal way, along with his tamping iron.

The "Horrible Accident", as the *Boston Globe* described it, might have been forgotten had its consequences not been so meticulously documented by Harlow. Today neuroscientists are using brain scanners to map the functions carried out by each bit of the brain and the sorry consequences of Gage's Horrible Accident are understandable in the light of this new science.

The neurologist Hannah Damasio, of the University of Iowa recently worked out - by using computerised tomography on the skull - exactly which parts of Gage's brain were lost. They match precisely the areas now known to give us the qualities we associate with our "highest" selves - the ability to execute plans, to inhibit base urges, and to make us sensitive to other people's emotions. Gage's could not do those things after his accident because he no longer had the requisite bits of brain: part of his personality was literally blown away. His case remains one of the most persuasive demonstrations of the modular construction of the human brain.

Rita Carter is author of *'Mapping the Mind'* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £25)

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

VICTOR: On 11 November 1998, to Inger (née Larsen) and Peter, a daughter, Cecilia Aurora, a sister for Lucia.

DEATHS

ELLIOT: Elizabeth, of Clifton, Bristol, died 28 November, after a short illness. Widow of John, sorely missed by Julia, Kate, Glynn, Rhodri and Martin. Funeral at South Bristol Crematorium, 11.30am on Tuesday 8 December. Flowers (donations to Oxfam or Amnesty, c/o Co-operative Funeral Services, 20 High Street, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS9 9DU).

WILKES: Barbara, died 24 November. Funeral at Golders Green Crematorium, Monday 14 December at 2.45pm.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

OTHER Gazette announcements (funerals, obituaries, marriages), which must be submitted in writing, are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. Always include a daytime telephone number.

The Independent's main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000.

The OBITUARIES e-mail address is obituaries@independent.co.uk

BIRTHDAYS

Miss Barbara Amiel, columnist, 58; The Marchioness of Anglesey, former chairman, Broadcasting Complaints Commission, 74; Sir Stephen Barrett, former ambassador to Poland, 67; Lt-Col Sir Simon Bland, former royal equerry, 75; Mr Jeff Bridges, actor, 49; Mrs Angela Browning MP, 52; Mr Horst Buchholz, actor, 66; Miss Ann Christopher, sculptor, 51; Mr Ronnie Corbett, comedian, 68; Mr Hywel Davies, former jockey, 42; Admiral Sir David Dobson, former chief of staff to Commander Allied Naval Forces Southern Europe, 60; Miss Deanna Durbin (Mime Charles David), former actress and singer, 77; Mr Philip Hammond MP, 43; Mr Adrian Head, circuit judge, 75; Miss Gemma Jones, actress, 56; Mr Clive Leach, chairman, Yorkshire Enterprise Ltd, Leeds Health Authority, 64; Mrs Pamela Winifred Matthews, former Principal, Westfield College, 84; Mr Richard Meade, Three-Day Eventer, 60; Mr William Menzies-Wilson, former chairman, Edinburgh Tankers, 72; Miss Yvonne Minton, mezzo-soprano, 60; Professor Lord Morris of Castle Morris, former Principal, St David's University College, Lampeter, 68; Miss Pamela Stephenson, actress and comedienne, 48; Mr Derek Wyatt MP, 49.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: John Cotton, Puritan leader in New England, 1585;

Thomas Godfrey, poet and playwright, 1736; Jeanne-Françoise Julie-Adélaïde Bernard, Madame Récamier, French society leader, 1777; Thomas Carlyle, writer, 1795; General Sir William Fenwick Williams, soldier, 1800; Dr John Kitto, writer and Biblical editor, 1804; George Henry Boughton, painter, 1833; Suzanne Butler, writer and satirist, 1835; Johann Heinrich Bonawitz, pianist, 1839; Lillian Russell (Helen Louise Leonard), singer and actress, 1861; Edith Louisa Cavell, nurse, 1865; Rainer Maria Rilke, poet, 1875; Richard Horatio Edgar Wallace, thriller novelist and playwright, 1875; Sir Herbert Hamilton Hart, conductor, 1879; Katharine Susannah Prichard, novelist, 1883; Sir Herbert Read, poet and critic, 1893; Alfred Leslie Rowse, scholar and historian, 1903.

Deaths: Pope John XXII, 1334; Nicholas Ferrar, theologian, 1637; Armand-Jean du Plessis, Cardinal and duc de Richelieu, statesman, 1642; William Drummond of Hawthornden, poet, 1649; Thomas Hobbes, political philosopher, 1679; John Gay, poet, playwright and writer, 1732; Robert Banks Jenkinson, second Earl of Liverpool, statesman, 1828; William Sturgeon, electrical engineer, 1850; James Duffield Harding, landscape painter, 1863; Stefan George, poet, 1933; Thomas Hunt Morgan, geneticist, 1945; Glenn Luther Martin, aircraft inventor, 1955; Jack (John Wesley Vivian) Payne, handleader, 1969; Hannah Arendt, political

philosopher, 1975; Baron Edward Benjamin Britten, composer, 1976.

On this day: Nicholas Breakspear was elected Pope Adrian IV, thus becoming the only Englishman to be pope, 1154; the Council of Trent was dissolved, 1563; the Observer was first published, 1791; income tax was first introduced, by William Pitt, 1798; the Inquisition in Spain was abolished by Napoleon, 1808; suttee (the burning of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre) was abolished in India, 1829; the colony of Queensland was established, 1859; the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London, were opened, 1882; the Chain Pier at Brighton was destroyed during heavy gales, 1896; the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was proclaimed, 1918; Timothy Healy became the first Governor-General of the Irish Free State, 1922; after two trains collided in fog at Lewisham, London, 92 people were killed and 173 injured, 1957; Jean Bedel Bokassa crowned himself emperor of the Central African Empire at Bangui, 1977; Dr Francisco de Sá Carneiro, prime minister of Portugal, was killed in an air crash at Lisbon, 1980.

Today is the Feast Day of St Anno, St Bernard of Parma, St John of Damascus, St Maruthas, St Osmund and St Sola.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Norman Coady, "Celebrations (I):

Uccello, *The Battle of San Romano*, 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Nancy Osborn, "Lady Duff Gordon-Lucile and Fashionable Dress, 1900-1914", 2pm. British Museum: Joyce Filer, "Styles of Burial in Ancient Egypt", 11.30am.

DINNERS

HMS Victory: Admiral Sir John Brigstocke, Second Sea Lord and Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command, and Lady Brigstocke were the hosts at a dinner held yesterday evening on board HMS Victory, Portsmouth.

Coningsby Club: The officers and committee of the Coningsby Club hosted their Christmas Dinner yesterday evening at the Royal Over-Seas League, London SW1. Mr Alan Clark MP was the guest of honour. Mr Jeremy Quinn, Chairman of the Coningsby Club, presided.

SYNAGOGUE SERVICES

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 3.38pm.

United Synagogues: 0181-343 8989. Federation of Synagogues: 0181-202 2263. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-580 1663. Reform Synagogues of Great Britain: 0181-348 4731. Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 0171-289 2572. New London Synagogue (Masorti): 0171-328 1626.

College was not liable for diving accident

FRIDAY LAW REPORT

4 DECEMBER 1998

Ratcliff v McConnell and others

Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, Lord Justice Thorpe and Lord Justice Mummery) 30 November 1998

Lord Justice Stuart-Smith said that the judge's reasoning and conclusions had been contaminated by errors of fact, but there were other difficulties with the judgment.

It was important in a case such as the present to identify the risk against which the plaintiff needed to be protected. If at all. In particular, it was necessary to see whether the plaintiff himself was aware of the risk of injury because it was obvious to an adult man. The judge had not adverted to the plaintiff's evidence relating to knowledge of it except in relation to contributory negligence. The risk in the present case was that in diving into the swimming pool late at night the plaintiff might hit his head on the bottom. The risk was obvious, unless the plaintiff made sure that there was sufficient depth of water to dive safely, which he had not.

The Occupiers Liability Act 1984 placed a duty on the occupier to trespassers "in respect of any risk of their suffering injury on the premises

by reason of any danger due to the state of the premises or to things done or omitted to be done on them".

Where a duty was owed under the 1984 Act, the duty was "to take such care as is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case", and varied greatly depending on whether the trespasser was very young or very old and so might not appreciate the nature of the danger which was or ought to be apparent to the adult.

The question of *volenti non fit injuria* had to be considered at the same time as the question of the existence of the duty, since if the trespasser willingly accepted the risk as his, there was, under section 1(6) of the 1984 Act, no duty owed by the occupier.

The plaintiff had been a very frank witness. The admissions he had made made it impossible for him to succeed. He had been told expressly by the defendants that the pool was closed. He had not been drunk, and had known what he was doing. He had deliberately climbed the wall. He had intended to make a shallow dive, knowing that it was necessary to make sure that there was enough water available before diving, and must have dived deeper than he had intended. He had ignored the prohibition on access and had done what he wanted to do anyway.

It was quite plain that the plaintiff had been aware of the risk and had willingly accepted it. Accordingly, the defendants had been under no duty to him.

KATE O'HANLON Barrister

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER

HAWTREE

kilter, n.

Sometimes spelt *ketter*, its origins are obscure, apparently unconnected with the verb for hitching up a skirt. It often meant a frame, or

the mechanism of a gun, and is familiar across Britain and in America, where James Russell Lowell lamented in 1883: "I must rest awhile. My brain is out of kilter."

Over here, we are made of sterner stuff: the weekend should have one back in action, that is to say in true kilter.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, visits the Surrey Space Centre for the design and build-

ing of satellites, Surrey University, Guildford; The Duke of Kent, as Chancellor, also attends, and presides over the conferment of degrees ceremony. The Duke of York visits the Ina Bearing Company, Llanelli, Dyfed; visits

Bosch Limited, Miskin, Vale of Glamorgan, Mid Glamorgan; and, as Patron, the Welsh Badminton Union, visits the Welsh Institute of Sport, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff. The Princess Royal, Colonel, the Blues and Roy-

als, visits Combermere Barracks, Windsor, Berkshire.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts

the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; Nijmegen Company Grenadier Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Irish Guards.

The unbearable niceness of Barney

ASK THE parent of a two-year-old who is the most terrifying dinosaur of all, and instead of pondering the relative menace of a tyrannosaurus and a velociraptor, they'll probably answer "Barney".

Barney is the kindest, gentlest, "have a nice day" American camp purple dinosaur in all history. When he squeals that he loves you, and that he loves all the children, you would gladly swap him for a real live stegosaurus wandering around your living-room.

The video, called *Colours*, is typical. Barney and his friends find a treasure map, and follow a series of clues that lead them to a treasure chest. They open it, to discover that the treasure is a rainbow. "This is the best treasure we could ever have," enthuses a sugary American boy, "as this is treasure we can share with all our friends."

But this is rubbish. If the chest had been crammed full of gold bullion, they could still have shared it with all their friends. So what they mean is, they don't mind sharing this treasure out because it's only a worthless rainbow. If there'd been anything valuable inside, we'd all have been told to piss off and find our own treasure. "After all, children," Barney would have said, "who painted that yellow triangle, me or you?"

One of the differences between British and American culture is that, when American companies discover a new way of ripping us off, they don't bother to disguise it. Teleubbies would never be as blatant as Barney.

"I'm so excited," he announces at the start of each video, "because I've just made my first film." Then, at the end of the plug, he says: "And remember, children - I love you."

There's probably an episode somewhere in which he says: "Hi, children. You know, I've just patented a new Barney saloon car - four-wheel drive, five gears and optional oak dashboard extra. Isn't that exciting? Well, if you really love me, you'll persuade your mummy and daddy to sell their house and buy one."



Otherwise you'll be chased through the woods by a wicked wolf. And remember, I love you." There's nothing cool about Barney, as there was with *Sesame Street*.

So, at Wembley Arena on Sunday night, I experienced a live show in which half of the audience hated the star they'd come to see. There were a number of issues I was fascinated to see resolved.

Would he, like most performers, do a live show that was much ruder than his TV act? Would there be a support band? A singing pterodactyl from the college circuit, to be discovered by the NME, perhaps? He had certainly followed the Wembley superstar routine, coming on 20 minutes late.

Maybe Barney's friend, BJ the yellow

MARK STEEL



ON LOCATION

puppet, was still sobering up.

But, within seconds of the opening, the cynicism of thousands of parents evaporated. Because, as the dinosaur came bounding across the stage, every toddler in the arena gawped in transfixed adulation. Most of them can't really have understood what they were about to see. So the adult equivalent must be to have been dragged along to a gig in 1979, wondering why you were there at all, when suddenly you popped The Jam launching into "Down in the Tube Station at Midnight".

My son, who is just over two, has never been as ecstatic as he was in the following 90 minutes, partly because, in some respects, the show did follow the pattern of a normal rock gig. After the initial dumb-struck euphoria he,

along with about 100 others, barged to the front by the stage and did that half-dancing, half-jumping thing you do at venues such as the Brixton Academy in south London. And to prevent the most exuberant from clambering under the stage, a line of muscular security staff in white T-shirts were posted in squatting positions at the front.

There are some differences from gigs for adults. When you're diving about to "Rage Against the Machine", you tend not to have your mum behind you taking photos and warning you not to bump into the speakers. And at Wembley on Sunday, during the interval, bouncers handed out hundreds of cardboard hats, which I don't remember happening when I saw Nick Cave at the Shepherd's Bush Empire.

But how did the stars spend the interval? Does the actor playing Barney have a bigger dressing-room than the rest? And does he ever get artistically frustrated?

It's possible, because Barney groups are too young even for pantomime games. Any subtle changes in choreography would therefore be lost, as would any attempt to develop the dark side of being a purple dinosaur 150 million years after the rest of his species have become extinct. The real purpose of the interval,

though, is to provide an opportunity for parents and toddlers to stroll around the Barney programmes (£7). Barney caps (£8) and fluffy Barneyes (£17). And with tickets at £12 each, car parking £7, and popcorn at £2.50, if you've got more than one child it's probably cheaper to go down to the Natural History Museum and put in an offer for a complete brontosaurus.

In the second half, BJ announces what he'd like for his birthday. Knowing that they'll be faced with demands for a similar present, you can feel 5,000 parents thinking: "Please say a Brrr."

"I'd like a big red scooter," he says. Five thousand parents hold their head in their hands, and mutter: "Shit."

For a finale, BJ is presented with a 12-ft-high birthday cake. What a splendid thought, that if a child were presented with a 9-ft-high birthday cake, they might say: "Durr, it's much smaller than the one BJ got from Barney."

said my son - but I didn't fancy his chances of getting past the security guards.

"Is there any chance of meeting Barney?" I asked a particularly huge bouncer afterwards. "No, that's finished, the exit's over there," he snarled in a monotone voice, while starting straight ahead. In the way American soldiers are supposed to shout, "I am a useless, weak piece of dirt, SIR!" at their sergeants.

So Barney had left the building. Maybe he was already on his way to a nightclub to do some coke.

From an adult point of view, the whole show was not as bad as it might have been. Maybe it was scaled down for an English audience, but it was much less goopy than the TV version.

And there was clearly no chance of an encore. Which didn't bother me, as the closing number, his monster hit "I love you and you love me", left me with a unique and unforgettable experience, of feeling two completely diverse emotions at the same time.

On the one hand, there was the life-defining, overwhelming joy of watching your own child beaming and clapping in rapturous delight; and at exactly the same time, the thought: "I bloody hate that purple, poxy dinosaur."

Rural retreat for the barking mad

Cassie is depressed. Dennis needs therapy. Muffet the dog thinks he's a cat. Welcome to Bell Mead,

The Priory for pets. By Marianne Brace

SOME come because they're miserable, others are into self-mutilation, a few are quite simply barking - all the time. On offer are fresh country air, a bit more space and a chance to romp in seven rolling acres. For the stressed-out stray, Bell Mead - Battersea Dogs Home's country annex - is for canines what The Priory is for pop stars.

Bell Mead, a stick's throw from where the Magna Carta was signed, is fit for a king, or at least minor royalty. Leased from the Crown, the red brick mansion with its sweeping drive, towering camellias, oaks and small lake, once belonged to a relative of Queen Victoria's.

But these days the slopes are alive with the sound of barking. Battersea's overflow annex can house up to 300 animals and about 250 of them like to let you know they're there.

Battersea Dogs Home acquired Bell Mead 20 years ago. It was originally intended as a kind of holiday centre where - swapping SW11 for a spell in Berkshire - the mongrels and mogs would benefit from less crowding and more exercise. But if today's sojourns tend to be short-term, it's for the best of reasons. A collage of snaps in Bell Mead's hallway is like a directory of former inmates. Beano, Buck, Bonzo, Bonnie, Bacardi - here are dogs looking winsome, dogs cocking an ear, dogs showing how a stint

at Bell Mead can be the ticket to a great new life.

Recent arrivals are housed in one block. Two nights ago 11 lurchers and greyhounds checked in from Ireland. Retired working dogs who have been in kennels for a year, they stand a better chance of being re-homed from Bell Mead. In their quilted green-and-red corduroy coats they look a treat. Just around the corner is Floozie, an 18-month-old Dalmatian from Wales, given to the home because her owners were away too much.

"We tend to get a lot of adolescent Dalmatians," explains Gail Cavill, the re-homing supervisor. The designer dog can be immature and destructive. "People can't cope with them. But we get families coming here, and the kids stand outside the kennel having tantrums, pointing at the dog and saying 'I want that one'."

And people sometimes take on more dog than they can chew. Dennis has oodles of charm. But this sweet, gentle Patterdale has been re-homed and returned twice in the two years Bell Mead has known him. He soils the house if left alone for too long. A dog may give you the nod, but the biography pinned to his kennel will tell you whether he's likely to savage your children and give your cat a nervous breakdown.

Animals book in to Bell Mead for a variety of reasons. Muffet, for instance, was a dog who thought he was a cat. He was rejected by his mother when he was born, and his surrogate mum was a cat who'd recently given birth to kittens. Gail recalls: "We were quite concerned about Muffet so we got him socialising with the other dogs here." There's no knowing what kind of identity crisis he might have suffered in later years, but after a six-week stay at Bell Mead he was judged sane again, and has since found a new owner.



Cassie, a young lurcher, was diagnosed with separation anxiety. Her treatment includes long walks in the countryside

John Lawrence

A current "patient" is Rasper, a Border collie puppy who is irrepressibly active. "He was very, very chase-motivated," says Gail. "But since he's been here he's become a lot calmer. We've got the paddock and space, with areas where dogs can go to unwind." Any animal with a serious attitude problem, meanwhile, gets help from the senior behaviourist, Ruth Yates.

"You tend to find the most intelligent dogs are the ones that have the most problems," Ruth says. Take the humungous Kermit, an 18-month-old Staffie cross. "He's very intelligent, a quick learner. But it's been very hard for him to cope with the noise and activity of Battersea. Because he's smart he modified his behaviour into be-

coming naughty - grabbing clothes, being difficult when he was being put away - and that made him difficult to re-home." By devising little tricks for Kermit to perform, Ruth has rechannelled his energy. Stephen, meanwhile (an Alsatian cross) has his own stash of biscuits. If he doesn't go berserk when someone passes his kennel, his quiet behaviour is rewarded with a crunchy snack.

Boredom is a problem in kennels and the managers are always looking for new ideas to keep occupants busy. It could be putting on the radio, or hiding food in toys. Animals need mental as well as physical stimulation. And dogs, especially, demand human company - which can be part of their problem.

Cassie, a young lurcher who loves children, suffers separation anxiety. She has been rehomed twice and each time her new owners have given up on her. Left alone she becomes destructive, messes in the house and barks continuously. Game, on the other hand, was a Labrador who arrived from Battersea with a people phobia.

Do animals suffer from depression? "Oh yes. I believe so, absolutely," says Gwen Olivier, head veterinary nurse. "Some may have come from a comfortable home where it's been nice and warm, and suddenly they're having to compete with a whole row of kennels for attention. Older animals find it difficult to adapt, and are quite anxious about things." Unsettled cats, for instance, can

stop eating, swipe and hiss at anything that goes near them, or like the rotund nine-year-old Sprout, be simply too shy to sell themselves to would-be owners.

Stress can take many forms. Some dogs endlessly chase their own tails. Others wag with such abandon that they damage the tip, which then needs to be surgically removed. Anxiety can lead to gastric problems, while kennel cough is the bane of animal homes. Dogs particularly vulnerable to respiratory problems are those with squashed-up faces and deep chests. Because Bell Mead is less enclosed than Battersea and has fresh air in abundance, they tend to recover faster than in town.

"The large breeds of dog such as great Danes and Alsa-

nians we like to get exercised on nice green grass," says Gwen. "Here the staff have the time to give them one-to-one attention because Bell Mead's in the country: it's not as busy as Battersea and so they get special care."

But for Bell Mead, as for Battersea, it's all about finding a home. Tired, jaded, stuck in a rut - Battersea's long-stay dogs and cats get new smells, sights and company to arouse their curiosity. It's a chance to conquer their kennel cough, fight their phobia and let their personality shine through.

"Battersea Dogs Home" starts on BBC1 on 7 December; "Battersea Dogs Home", by Robin McGibbon and Bob Long (BBC Worldwide, price £9.99)

We'd like to bring some horror stories to your attention.

This Sunday read our special report in The Independent on Sunday Human Rights 50 years on

WATERSTONE'S READ ON THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY Supporting The Medical Foundation Caring for victims of torture

A waste of space

Continued from page 1 However, many had expected far more from it, because in August 1996 Nasa had lined up a team of scientists proclaiming that they had discovered evidence of past life on Mars in a meteorite. That news went around the world. The fact that since then, not a single independent scientist has said that the data unequivocally supports such a viewpoint hasn't

received as much coverage, especially not from Nasa.

But Nasa, like a shark, always keeps moving forward onto the next target. Right now, it is to get a space station built and orbiting the planet, even though there is no conceivable financial justification for doing so. Among Nasa's declared aims for the ISS are "to forge new partnerships with the nations of the world" and "significantly - to sustain and strengthen the United States' strongest export sector, aerospace technology, which in 1995 exceeded \$33 billion." So it's not quite about altruism, then.

The truth is that there will be no factories in space. Mir's chequered history, including an onboard fire, a collision with a cargo ship and repeated computer problems, demonstrate that space is not, and never will be, an easy place to live.

It's not a safe place, either. New Scientist magazine recently carried out a series of calculations looking at the odds of something disastrous happening. It turns out that though the chance of a Shuttle blowing up on its launch is only 1 per cent, and of a Russian uncrewed module doing the same just 8 per cent, when you calcu-

late the chances of that remaining true for 33 Shuttle launches and 12 Russian ones, the chance of it all going to plan is just 26.4 per cent - that is, there's a 73.6 per cent chance of something blowing up.

The risks from "space junk" hitting the station are equally worrying. Though tiny - perhaps as big as a piece of gravel - the particles are moving so fast that they can pack the punch of a car going at 100mph. The risk calculation suggests that over 20 years, there is a 42 per cent chance that some whirling cosmic dervish will penetrate the station's hull.

Nasa, however, has not formally analysed the risks involved. New Scientist found: even as the first (Russian) element was launched last month, a full "probabilistic risk analysis" had not been done.

But typical of Nasa's skewed vision of what's important is its concern over the lack of a proper name. Reagan suggested "Freedom", that grated with the Russians, who rejected it. "Unity", the name of the module which will connect the Russian and American components of the station together, has not been taken as the overall name.

Earlier this week, Nasa announced the results of a competition among children (American ones, of course) to suggest a suitable name. Three suggestions were the Dudeship, the Milky Way Bar Stop and the Totally Rad Space Place. It's hard to know if that means that the station has succeeded in the first part of one of its aims - "to inspire our children, foster the next generation of scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs, and satisfy humanity's ancient need to explore and achieve". But one suspects not.

away in the future with transistors. Walkman players and ghetto blasters took on your precious tape fully capable of Home Service, the programme, the Third Radio Luxembourg, which was all a girl re-

der airwaves in those days. What I liked about it was what I still like about it: it was a radio station, and it's a radio station. Like many of my friends, I am none too good at stations with 100 per cent. Perhaps I inherited it from my mother, who was a radio addict. I never once had a radio, but I was always listening to the radio. I remember the radio being a household item, and I remember the radio being a household item. I remember the radio being a household item, and I remember the radio being a household item.

On the one hand, there was the life-defining, overwhelming joy of watching your own child beaming and clapping in rapturous delight; and at exactly the same time, the thought: "I bloody hate that purple, poxy dinosaur."

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The retuning of a radio star

The Roberts was the original personal radio. Then came Walkmans. Now the design classic is back on air. By Charlotte Bingham

As a wedding present, we received a brown leather Roberts portable, very much "The Thing" back in the early Sixties. Far away in the future were the days of transistors, Walkmen, personal CD players and ghetto blasters - what you took on your picnic then was 4lbs worth of battery-powered hand luggage fully capable of picking up the Home Service, the Light Programme, the Third Programme, Radio Luxembourg and Hilversum, which was all a girl really needed on her airwaves in those pre-silicon days. What I liked about my Roberts is what I still like about it - its design exudes an indisputable cheerfulness, and it's a doddle to tune.

Like many of my sex, I suspect, I am none too good at locating radio stations with 100 per cent accuracy. Perhaps I inherited this from my mother who also owned a Roberts radio, which, as far as I can recall, she never once had in perfect tune. Given to rising early, she would switch on her radio at full volume and entertain the rest of our still slumbering household with long, indecipherable shipping forecasts and farming reports which sounded as if they had been recorded underwater. Unable to get back to sleep, I would lie in my bed and pretend I was a British agent marooned in war-torn France trying to make radio contact with London, a fantasy which was generally interrupted by a set of out-of-tune pips played fortissimo as my mother turned up the volume to hear the first news bulletin of the day.

Mercifully, I experienced no such difficulties with our first Roberts, even though you had to twiddle the knobs a bit in order to get the station right on line. But the services were so clearly marked that all you really had to do was find the right wavelength and surf the little squares that said Home or Light, or whatever, until all came clear. Once tuned, the reception was faultless and I would either clear away the breakfast things to the music of *Housewife's Choice*, or write away at my desk to the sound of the Third Programme.

Since it was a wedding present, Mr Roberts naturally came away with us on honeymoon and, naturally, as with anyone with whom you honeymoon, I got overly fond of not only my new partner but also of Mr Roberts, who became very much



Above: Charlotte Bingham. Inset: Roberts radios, old (red) and new (yellow) John Lawrence

part of my baggage. Having been with us ever since our marriage, our Roberts now accompanied us everywhere: on picnic, on vacation, to work and to play - even to bed, where he would serenade us from under the bedroom window or amuse and entertain us should we be struck down with the 'flu - as it was known in those pre-virus days. Imagine then the horror when one night we were woken to the sound of our sports car being stolen from outside our house - not so

much at the loss of our well-insured motor but at the hijacking of poor Mr Roberts, whom I had carelessly left in the car boot after a Sunday out on the river. The police eventually found the car but Mr Roberts was lost forever, snatched

by a thief with the best of taste. We bought another one at once, rather as you are advised to do after losing a much loved pet. The new Mr Roberts wore a bright red coat and, to all intents and purposes, seemed no different from his predecessor. He was as remorselessly cheerful and just as easy to tune, but somehow we didn't get along quite so well. It wasn't to do with old fiddle fashion, although I suppose he did look a little overweight alongside the new transistorised models - nor was I worried about his limited range, since I rarely listened to anything else other than the three BBC programmes. Maybe it was all to do with the change in programming which coincided with the loss of our original radio. Into the atmosphere went the Home Service and the Third programmes and in came Radio One and Tony Blackburn, Radio Two and Jimmy Young, Radio Three and Radio Four, and the sign of the furrowed brow.

Fed up with trying to find something to which I genuinely wanted to listen to, I surfed the dial less and less and Mr Roberts fell more and more silent. All I listened to were the programmes my partner was in, broadcasts to which he would have to pre-tune Mr R before leaving for Broadcasting House. Too old for Radio One and too young for Radio Two, I wrote in silence, watched by the muted radio whose once cheerful grille now assumed an expression of sorrow, as if he too mourned the passing of the radio days gone by.

Then the very worst happened - I was unfaithful. A friend arrived at our house, hotfoot back from the Orient, and with him he brought a Sony Walkman. It was love at first sound. Hardly able to believe the evidence of my ears, I rushed off and bought a Sony of my own. Worse followed. Before you could say, 'Wow!', they brought out a radio-cassette player as well, then came one you

could wear jogging - and swimming - and on horseback. Suddenly there were CDs and satellites, and stacking systems and compact sound centres and hi-fis that brought the concert hall into your bedroom, all of which, once programmed, never again needed tuning. A press of the button and the world was your audible oyster. The trouble was, I didn't know which button to press.

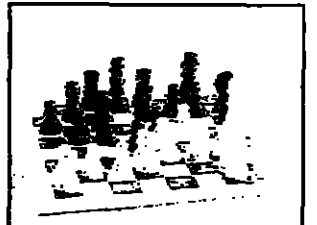
There were so many on offer - besides the remote handsets designed to control everything from the hi-fi to the front door. Time and time again, I would be found standing in front of the television trying to turn it on with the washing machine remote. I couldn't even manage the radio, even though it had 24 pre-programmed stations. And the reason why I couldn't manage it was because I didn't know which button to press to turn the whole thing on - which no doubt is why, for my last birthday, my partner gave me another radio, a brand new unstate of the art retro Roberts portable.

Mr Roberts III wears blue. He also has a different face which says very precisely where to find everything from R2 to Virgin. He has little square tabs which, when pressed, give you FM, MW or LW and he even has a button for tone and a knob marked Tuning. Otherwise, he looks as cheerful as ever with his golden grille underneath his familiar autograph. He's back in pride of place as well, underneath the bedroom window where he ushers in each new day by waking us with Wogan and putting us to sleep with a bedtime story. Dear Mr Roberts - if ever there was a simple design designed simply for pleasure, you are it.

Charlotte Bingham's latest novel is 'Love Song' (Bantam). For information on the Roberts Radio, ring 01709 571722

FIRST CLASS DELIVERIES

THE MOST stylish kitchen is nothing without a sprinkling of designer foodstuffs. Like transforming a sitting-room with the artful use of cushions and a lamp, you can make your kitchen a place in which Delia herself might feel at home by adding a tin of French anchovies and a potted bay tree here, a bottle of estate olive oil and a jar of chutney there. And you can do it all by mail order.



Tinned seasoning, top, and the chocolate chess set

Morel Bros, Cobbe & Son has a particularly tempting catalogue. Decorate your dresser with their tins of French fish, elegantly adorned with fine script and a coat of arms (from £1.75 each) and American seasonings eccentrically labelled as Mt Olympus Rub, Prairie Rub and Dragon Rub. They cost £4.20 each, worth it for the amusing pictures on the tins (Dragon Rub shows a dragon breathing flames beside the Great Wall of China). The wackiest item in the catalogue is a Spanish chess set in dark brown and white chocolate (£5.80). But the ultimate in chic style is the chocolate fondue, which comes in frosted-glass containers and looks like scented candles. Available in six different flavours, they are mouth-watering. "When reheated they will gradually turn into a smooth, glossy liquid into which you can dip fruit or sweet biscuits..." Surely a snip at £8.85 each. Best item: fruit chutney in mustard seed oil. £4. Worst item: boring herbal teas from £1.45

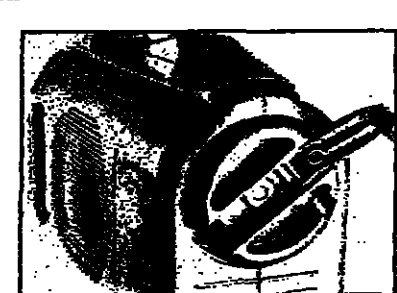
FOR KITCHEN gardeners. The Gluttonous Gardener's catalogue is beautifully laid out and full of witty gifts such as "that old chestnut", a box of *marrons glacés* that comes with a root-wrapped sweet-chestnut tree, planting details and recipes, and the Passion Pack, which contains a passion-flower plant, fresh passion-fruits and a bottle of champagne. Best item: the gin drinker's companion, £45. Worst item: Bay watch, £15

Morel Bros, Cobbe & Son, Unit 129, Coldharbour Lane, London SE5 (0171-346 0046) The Gluttonous Gardener, Vitis House, 50 Dickens Street, London SW8 (0171-827 0800) Last ordering date for Christmas delivery is 18 December AMICIA DE MOUBRAY

Not just a dummy...

... nowadays radios come in fish, handbag and wind-up format. There's even one by Philippe Starck. By Katy Guest

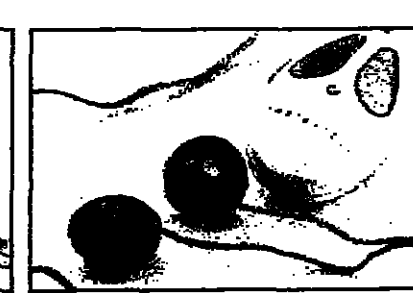
ALTHOUGH ITS integral technology is no more sophisticated than that of the original Roberts, the humble radio set has come a long way. As the only provider of easily-absorbed background entertainment in a fast-moving world, radio has become all things to all people. You can spend up to £550 on a single set (the Sony ICSFW77, available from Dixons 0990 500049 is one), or, for as little as £14.99, buy a radio that you can take into the shower: the Angelfish from the Save the Children catalogue, 0870 606 3530.



Listeners who love this cheery, aquatic aid should also check out Boots's pink, plastic Handbag Radio, £5, (above right) perfect for kitsch kids, and the silver Mini Radio from Debenhams (above middle), 0171-408 3536.



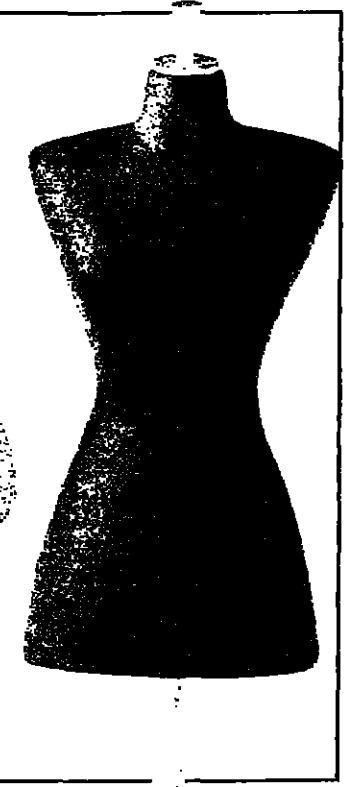
Minimalists would do well to invest in one of Philippe Starck's Moosk range, £52 from Alessi (above left) 01920 444272, or the Mannequin (far right) £25, Graham & Green, 0171-727 4594. These exquisite little triumphs of style-over-



content should be tuned to jazz and discreetly positioned in any designer living room. The Bayliss wind-up machine (far left), £59.99, with solar panel, from Splash Communications, 01285 659559) has



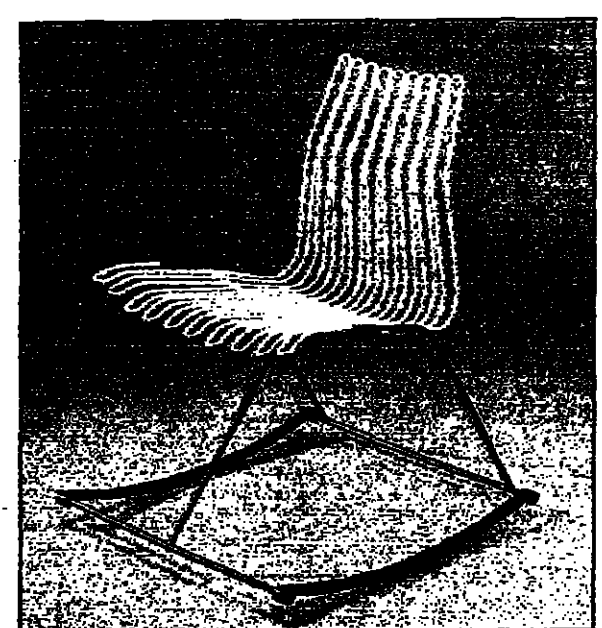
revolutionised radio, and is a godsend for those who can never find the right batteries. It runs for one hour with 2 minutes winding, is environmentally friendly and invaluable in areas with no power supply. For those fazed by



gadgets, and who long for the days of the shipping forecast crackled through a worn, leather jacket, however, Roberts (see article above), who still manufacture up-to-date, quality radios, also produce a replica Fifties machine.

DESIGN NEWS

AN ELECTROLUX robot vacuum cleaner, Ernest Race's formica and aluminium chair (right) and a Baygen torch are some of the "icons of the century" chosen for display at the 20th Century at Olympia fair this weekend. Some 60 exhibitors from the UK and Europe will offer tempting antiques of the future, while a series of lectures includes Paul Reeves on the British Arts and Crafts movement (today, 2.30 and 4.30pm), Victor Arwas on Decorative Arts, from Art Nouveau to Modernism (today, 6.30pm) and Mark Haworth-Booth on Contemporary Photography (Sat 5.30pm). 20th Century at Olympia runs until Sunday 6 Dec at Olympia 2 Exhibition Centre, Hammersmith Road, London W14. Fri 11-8, Sat & Sun, 11-7; admission £5. 0171-370 8899 (to book lectures)



THE CONRAN Foundation, set up in 1993, is a "living" archive of fin-de-siècle industrial products. Every year it stages an exhibition curated by a individual with a "non-museum"

favourites such as the Olympus LT Zoom Camera, along with a Psion 5 Personal Organiser, a Saracen 2WD Electric Wheelchair and much more. Conran Foundation Collection 1998 runs 4 December-31 January 1999 at the Design Museum, Shad Thames, London SE1, 11.30-6 daily (0171-378 6055)

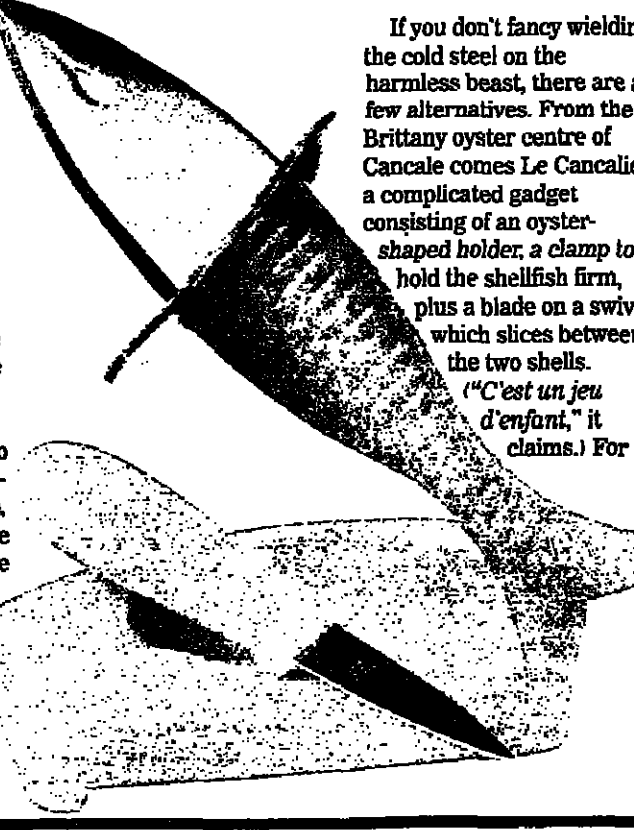
THOSE WHO want to do more than dream of a white Christmas should head to Mission in London, whose latest exhibition, Carte Blanche, consists of objects in cool shades of pale. Look out for luminous furniture by Mafko Tsutsumi, pod storage systems by Kirsten Jones, and Hive's chic felt notebooks; plus snowy rugs and furniture. Carte Blanche runs until 14 January 1999 at Mission, 45 Hereford Road, London W2. 0171-792 4633

background. This year it is the photographer David Constantine, a founding director of the Motivation Charitable Trust. Unsurprisingly, his objects include photographic

Oysters - an open and shut case

"BIG CHAP with a small moustache and the sort of eye that can open an oyster at 60 paces." Unless you happen to possess the penetrating glare of Bertie Wooster's sworn foe Roderick Spode, you'll have to use a knife to tackle the placid bivalve. As with every other kitchen utensil, designers have leaped at the chance to develop ever more stylish variations to entice the oyster-fancier.

Divertimenti want you to start shucking with a gorgeously scaled implement (top right, £19.95), which looks like it too might recently have emerged from the briney. Selfridge's sell a fancy version of the traditional squat-bladed French oyster knife (£6.75), while the Conran Shop offer an elegant stilet to slip into the heart of the shellfish (£8.95).

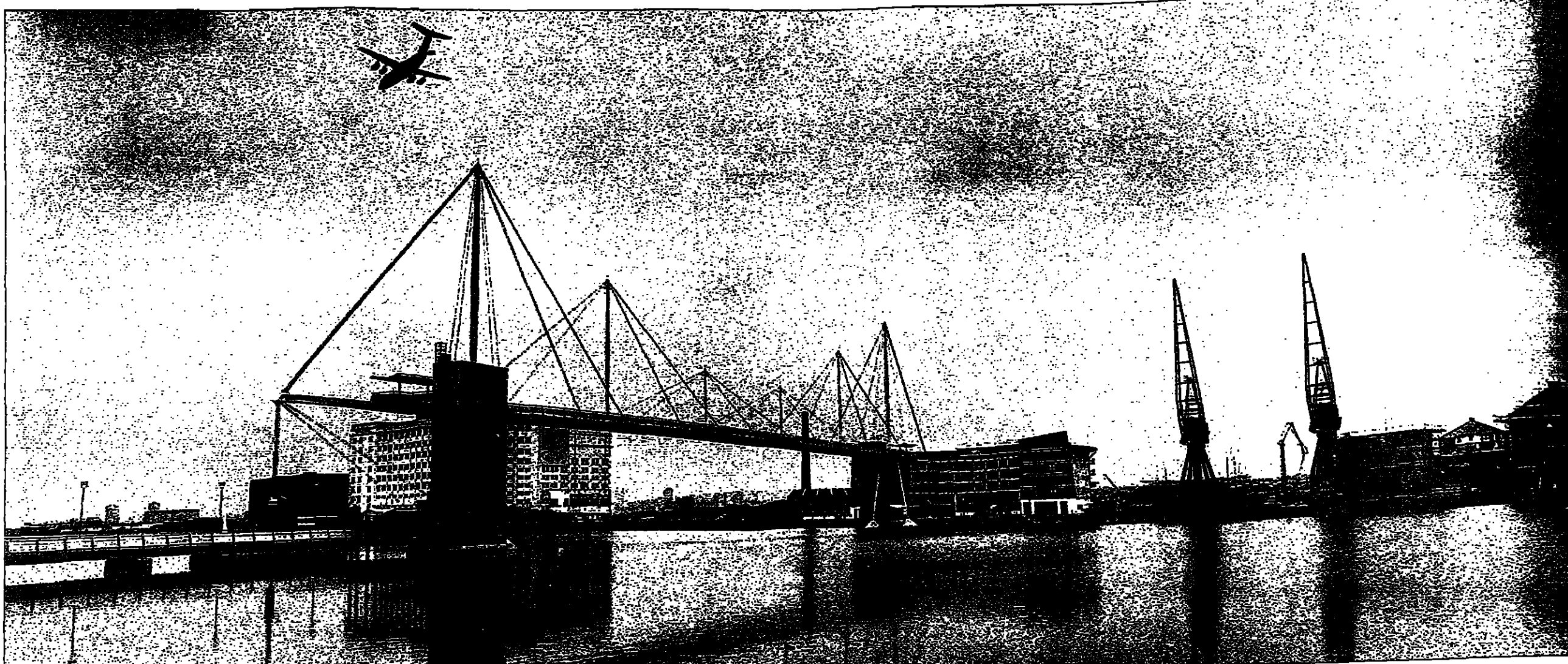


If you don't fancy wielding the cold steel on the harmless beast, there are a few alternatives. From the Brittany oyster centre of Cancale comes Le Cancalien, a complicated gadget consisting of an oyster-shaped holder, a clamp to hold the shellfish firm, plus a blade on a swivel which slices between the two shells. ("C'est un jeu d'enfant," it claims.) For

the wrong side of a hundred quid, you can even get an electronic guillotine which promises to bisect the bivalve in an instant. There is one simple reason why all of the above are superfluous. The irksome business of cleaving oysters - splintered shells, bloody fingers and all - has been licked once and for all by a simple French device known as Le Clic Huître (below, left). It consists of a basic, long-bladed knife and a plastic oyster-holder which resembles a soapdish. Put the oyster in the holder and hold down, insert the knife at the hinge end of the shellfish and Robert est votre oncle.

CHRISTOPHER HIRST
Le Clic Huître is available from Seasalter Shellfish, Whitstable, Kent (01227 272003) for £5.50, 55p p&p

10/ARCHITECTURE



Another missed opportunity in Docklands: the no-go Royal Victoria Docks bridge was designed as a transporter with a 40-person cable car underneath, below left; below right, the footbridge

Philip Meech

A bridge not far enough

The Royal Victoria Dock Bridge, designed by master architect Alex Lifschutz, is the longest in the capital, spanning 360 metres of the Thames. But there is one small problem: it doesn't go anywhere. By Nonie Niesewand

The young architect of the popular Coin Street community housing and the masterplanner of Waterloo Terminus, Alex Lifschutz is going places fast. The same cannot be said for his bridge. London's newest – and longest – bridge, the Royal Victoria Dock Bridge, has no destination. It starts well amid a honey-and-red-brick Wimpey village called Britannia. Then, after spanning 360 metres of the Thames, the bridge stops just short of the shore.

Plans by property developer Excel to build a massive exhibition centre on the north shore went belly up along with the Asian economy. The bridge ends just a dinghy ride away from dry land because the original plan was to build out from the shore. Now a jetty links the bridge to land but there is absolutely nothing there to make you want to get off. Worse, you can't get onto it. The two lifts up to the bridge 14 metres above travel up and down with nobody in them. Maintenance men do keep them going, but only to stop them seizing up in cold weather.

Excel's plan was not the only one to be shelved. The bridge was built 14 metres high to allow tall ships from a proposed marina to sail silently beneath: that was scuppered when the flight path into London City airport bit into the zone.

At least the bridge is handsome. Lifschutz, with engineer Matthew Wells of Techniker, won a competition in 1994 by London Docklands Development Corporation, which was redeveloping the 162 hectares of Royal Docks. They met all the technical requirements of the brief with-

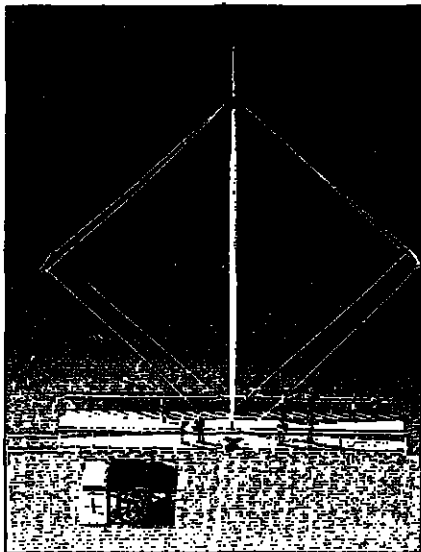
in a parabolic arch. Clad in iroko wood with weathered silver, topped with masts rigged like yachts, ending in shapely gowns and stems, the boat imagery is followed in the upturned steel boat shapes all along its spine. Doubling as seats on the footbridge, they also strengthen the bridge, which has to run a cable car along its underbelly.

The cable car track to shuttle 40 people backwards and forwards above the water is there, but the scheme is no longer on track. But why would anyone want to spend £500,000 to make their £4.5m bridge fully operative with the cable car when it leads nowhere?

"I judge a good bridge by the experience of crossing it, the non-slip of timbered cladding underneath," Alex Lifschutz is quietly optimistic that one day the residents and visitors will not only leg it across the bridge but watch regattas from it.

He may just be lucky. BURA, the British Urban Regeneration Authority, which took their members on a tour of showpiece urban regenerative schemes in the London borough of Newham, started out from the Royal Victoria footbridge.

Standing on the bridge on a perishingly cold day, with a view of the Dome to the west and City airport to the east, both dwarfed by the vast mudflats and great basin of water, you can see what a daunting task faced London Docklands Development Corporation back in 1992 when they published their development plan for the Royal Docks. Over the years they drained areas, reclaimed land and landscaped or built on it, built London City airport, spent £350m on dual carriageways and the Docklands Light Railway, and made the plans



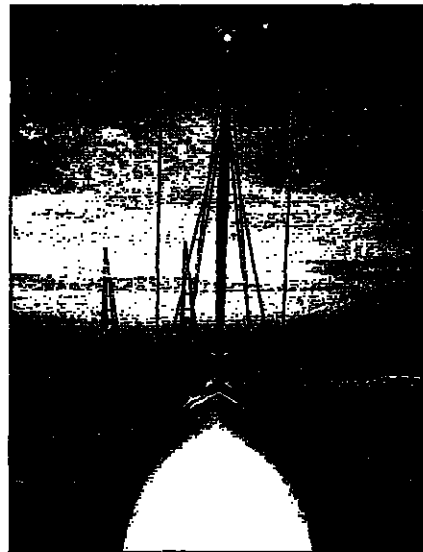
for the Jubilee Line extension.

Eric Sorenson, the former chief executive of LDDC, didn't just want regeneration; he wanted architectural landmarks. He is optimistic that the whole Docklands enterprise will one day be complete.

"Would I have changed the way we approached the development at Royal Victoria Docks? Not much. It was an urban village scheme, genuinely mixed, with a primary school early on.

"The Thames Barrier Park on formerly contaminated land is underway with a Barretts estate next to one of London's unsung attributes, the Thames Barrier itself. All the signs are still that the project is making headway in the market."

LDDC, the first urban regeneration



task force with a big budget and big brief

was disbanded last year. Now the new landlords are England's biggest and most powerful land and property developer, English Partnerships. Financed by the Government to bring derelict, vacant and underused land and buildings into life in partnership with public, private and voluntary sector organisations, they have 3,200 projects on the go.

Anthony Dunnett, the chief executive officer at English Partnerships, uses the fashionable jargon of urban regenerators everywhere. "Top-down, bottom-up". Ideas taken at the top filter down to meet needs from the local community, and are made to happen somewhere in the middle. "Top-driven projects turn into white

elephants," Anthony Dunnett says.

If ever a white elephant masqueraded as a bridge it is at the Royal Victoria Docks, but Dunnett says that LDDC "made a bold statement with their essential spine, the infrastructure". Having dalled for 18 months, English Partnerships now have a team responsible for the Royal Docks. "We have a master plan," says Dunnett. "It is essential to create living communities. For example, we know we need more single dwellings, gay households, singles leaving home, widows and widowers."

If he wants homes in Docklands, he must be really worried about the consortium building the two, £250m Millennium Village project in Greenwich.

The village is supposed to have 1,400 homes, but plans for the first 80 only went before Greenwich Council's planning committee last night. So when the village opens alongside the Dome on 31 December 1999, there will only be a handful of residents to see the fireworks.

Greenwich Council has an agreement that 25 per cent of the site will be affordable housing, but their insistence that most of it is two-storey with private gardens rather than clustered around communal gardens has actually reduced that figure to 21 per cent.

English Partnerships is putting a brave face on the difficulties. "Already we have a waiting list for them and not a stone has been laid," claims Glenn Baxter, the media and marketing executive for Millennium Village and English Partnerships.

Yet no contract has been signed with the consortium – the architect Ralph Erskine, architects Hunt Thompson Associates,

the developer Countryside Properties and builder Taylor Woodrow. Rows over contamination of the old gasworks site are said to be slowing it down.

English Partnerships, which has spent £180m cleaning up the site, claims that the least contaminated area on the peninsula is the housing area, yet they admit that not all the toxic material from the old gasworks was removed from the site. Contaminated material locked underground was capped.

Now a marker warns contractors about entering a contaminated area when they sink foundations or pipework underground. By Christmas, the deal should be signed and sealed.

So is the Britannia estate at Royal Docks the way forward for Docklands – even though there is no way onto the Docklands Light Railway until the bridge is opened? With just 250 Wimpey homes with bolt-on porches and pediments and its own waterfront net-curtained crescent, Newham councillors claim the estate is a good mixed-use residential area with a junior school, shops and housing association accommodation. But will that make it a community?

People want to live in towns, not in suburbia and not in the country. But for too many people, urban regeneration means lonely high-rise estates, vandalism, boarded up factories and warehouses, soulless shopping and brutal office blocks. Even in areas where millions of pounds have been spent, it can mean a cement spaghetti junction ending in a brick wall. Or in a bridge that goes nowhere. For the residents of Britannia there is still no escape.

Scotland the brave

The new Museum of Scotland was opened on Monday – St Andrew's Day. The story of a triumphant end to 25 years of political infighting, Westminster domination and internal divisions is told by Charles McKean

SO MANY new museums and art galleries have opened in the last 20 years that you can buy comparative coffee-table books about them. They have indeed become the secular churches and cathedrals of the late 20th century. Few, however, have had their objects ecumenically and ceremonially blessed in church in front of the largest gathering of crafts, trades and professions for 200 years.

Last Sunday, the inauguration of the Museum of Scotland took place in the awesome and dignified sepulchre of St Giles in Edinburgh. Patently the new museum, in Scots' eyes at least, was not just yet another museum. The Museum of Scotland, the 1991 winning design of one of the largest and most controversial of international competitions, may be the finest Scottish building of the 20th century.

The museum's director, Mark Jones, described the project as completing "unfinished business". Scotland began to accumulate its appropriate national cultural institutions during the Enlightenment but, until now, never had a purpose-built structure to contain the breadth of objects required to represent its history. Once the concept

of the Museum of Scotland was coined in 1981, what began as a simple matter of a new title for the Scottish collections acquired weightier overtones. The idea swelled over the decade. Just two years later, the "presentation of distinctive or outstanding aspects of the nation's culture" had become a "sanctuary of national pride".

Almost inevitably a few years later, the ambition arose for the building to be a "symbol of national identity". By the time of the architectural competition in 1991 – long before *Braveheart* – Magnus Magnusson had defined its purpose as reflecting the nation's place in the wider world. No surprise, therefore, that there was pressure to open it on St Andrew's Day.

The National Museums of Scotland had been created from two, previously separate museums. The Royal Scottish Museum (RSM) in Chambers Street and the Museum of Antiquities in Queen Street had both been acknowledged to be short of space and requiring extensions, or a new building, first in 1929 and then in 1951. Expansive plans were gradually whittled away until both were forced to negotiate for shared

use of a new site next to the RSM. Four schemes were developed and abandoned. The conflict could be symbolised by the RSM's desire for a planetarium and the Antiquities' desire for a medieval hall. Natural incompatibilities were exacerbated by the jockeying for space; the project was abandoned after 20 years.

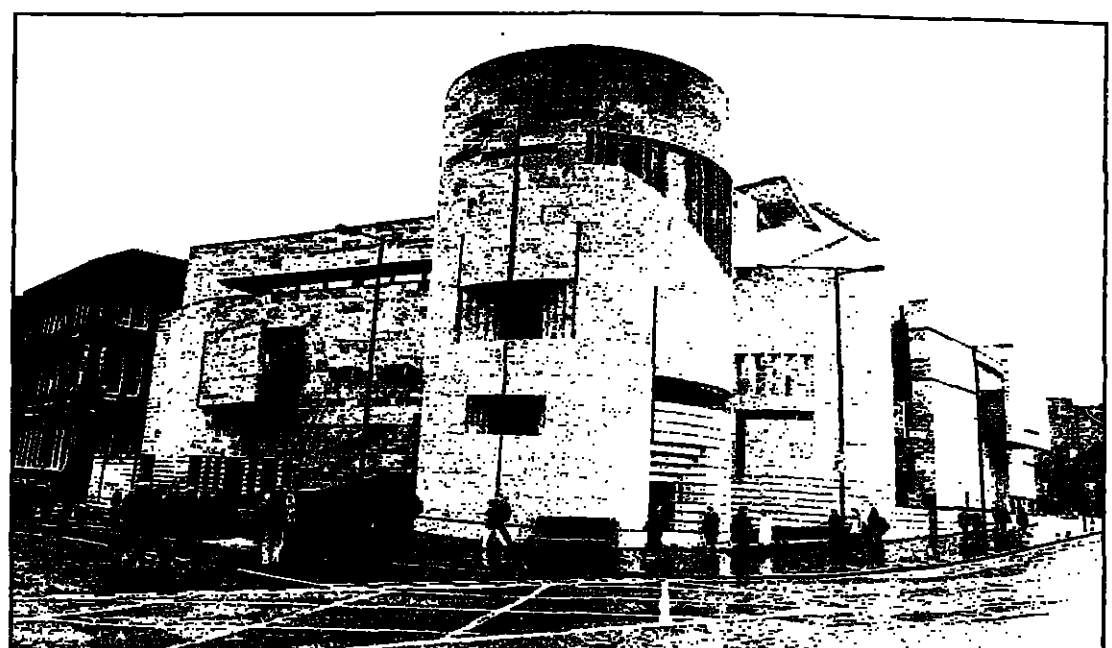
A committee set up by the government recommended separate museums on separate sites but the government rejected that and merged the two museums, selected the current site but sold half of it. Lord Bute was appointed to chair the merger, and then the trustees of the new institution. For reasons of unity, the new building could only be an extension of the RSM, rather than have its own identity.

The museum that opened on Monday is no longer an extension. It has its own heraldic entrance through a prominent drum tower. All the non-Scottish displays originally required in the competition have been excised. The scale and materials (stone) are similar between the old and new museums, but the former is determinedly Venetian and the latter equally determinedly abstracted from Scottish precedent.

Gordon Benson and Alan Forsyth won the competition to design the museum with its brilliant plan, its empathy with the site and its response to the idea of Scotland and its objects. "Architecture from the past touches the heart. The next step is how to continue it," they said.

Inspired by the strength of the collections, it had adorned its competition drawings with strategically located icons, and with references to historic Scots precedents, notably the curtain wall castles of the Gaeltachd. The plan of the building bears a close metaphorical resemblance to those of Duntrune, Dunstaffnage, Dunollie, Mingarry and Tioram. The curtain wall enfolds the site in glowing, iron-stained sheets of Clashach sandstone; the central courtyard – Hawthornden Court – is visually roofed by sky and scudding clouds, and the tower is the main stack of galleries at the back.

The architecture, inspired equally by Le Corbusier and Mackintosh, has an element entirely of its own – an almost "look, no hands" apparent weightlessness and a desire to eradicate technology save where it contributes to the museum's message. It conveys the resonance of



Benson & Forsyth's new museum on Chambers Street, Edinburgh

Colin McPherson

Scottish architectural history without copying or compromising the late-20th-century design.

From the street there is no inkling of the richness within. White, top-lit volumes connect tight, low spaces with painted ceilings, cavernous light wells, sculptured doorways and lintels; round every corner there is either a spatial or an iconic surprise. Wherever you walk in this building, you are offered unexpected but scrupulously controlled glimpses of views of the outside.

To achieve a building of this quality represents an unusual act of patronage. The momentum came from Lord Bute, who demanded a build-

ing of "remark and excellence". Even more significant was his belief that the building "should animate what it contains". So the museum was to be site-specific and object-specific, not a museum of collections but one of narratives about Scotland. Bute lay about the Secretaries of State who refused to fund the extension. Before his death in 1993, he set in motion the extraordinary achievement of raising almost £18m from the private sector and the lottery to fund the fitting out. His team breasted the resignation of the Prince of Wales in 1991 and Lord Bute's successor, Robert Smith, had to snatch the project from

imminent political cancellation only a few years later.

The building – which despite its opening on Monday is still not complete – is admired by Enric Miralles, the Catalan architect of the new Scottish parliament, whose site is half a mile away. He admires it for its quality, and the way that it seems to metamorphose according to the changing light and weather. In so doing, the Scottishness of this international building is manifest.

Charles McKean, professor of Scottish architectural history at the University of Dundee, is writing the official history of the museum.

Pinpoint the panic button

Calm down - anxiety attacks are not a form of hysteria, and their cause is treatable. By Sanjida O'Connell

Panic attacks are seen as a particularly modern disease, a product of our stress-filled culture and hectic work schedules. Recent studies have shown that panic is not purely an hysterical overreaction to modern living but is caused by a brain abnormality which can be treated with Prozac-like drugs.

A typical panic attack is when you start to shake, sweat, feel nauseous and dizzy, and your heart begins to pump faster. These attacks can appear for no apparent reason, but if a person has more than one attack a week for over three weeks, they may be suffering from panic disorder. Often there is no recognisable trigger, but once someone has started having panic attacks, they may become linked to specific situations, such as travelling on the train or public speaking.

One in 10 people will have an attack at some point in their lives, but in about one in 50 people this will develop into a panic disorder. More women than men suffer from panic attacks, and the disorder is most prevalent in young people aged between 25 to 34.

One woman with agoraphobia had to receive special permission to marry at home

Professor David Nutt, from the Psychopharmacology Department at Bristol University, believes that older people suffer less because their brains are less active. "In your twenties, your brain is at its most plastic and reactive," he says.

There are other contributing factors to the youthful nature of panic attacks. "People in their twenties are beginning to leave home, they're more isolated, they're facing adult life for the first time: it's a time when there's maximum pressure on them, and they no longer have the support of their families."

Although the term panic originally derives from the name of a Greek god, Pan, who could allegedly strike terror into the heart of man and beast alike, and loved to make strange sounds in the night, panic disorder is a modern disease.

This is partly because the condition has only been treated seriously during the last 20 years, but it may be on the increase due to our modern lifestyle, where we are surrounded by crowded and over-bright

environments such as supermarkets and windowless office blocks. One theory is that an overload of sensory stimulation may trigger panic attacks; in addition, what many people are frightened of is not being able to escape.

Prof Nutt believes that panic disorders are caused by an over-production of chemicals in the brain that are designed to elicit a fight or flight response in the presence of danger. Normally a quick physical and emotional response to what might be a life-threatening situation is beneficial in evolutionary terms.

In our society women are particularly susceptible to panic. This may be because women often suffer from multiple stresses, such as trying to work and bring up a child, but the original biological reason could be linked to the hormone oestrogen. The evidence for this claim comes from studies of post-menopausal women who were given oestrogen during hormone replacement treatment and who started to suffer from panic attacks, either for the first time, or for the first time since the menopause.

"Oestrogen may turn on panic," says Prof Nutt, arguing that this link between oestrogen and panic could have evolved for a reason. "Young women who are reproductively active may be more prone to pay attention and show anxiety around children, which is advantageous."

There are several different kinds of anxiety caused by panic. One patient, who suffered from agoraphobia, the fear of open spaces, had to receive special permission to get married at home since she had been unable to leave the house for eight years. Many of us will have experienced social phobia to some extent - anxiety in social situations when all the attention is focused on oneself, such as public speaking. A social phobic finds panic-inducing situations worse when another person is with them; in a restaurant he or she will sit at the side or the back, whereas someone with panic disorder sits near the door.

Another kind is GAD, general anxiety disorder. This is chronic anxiety about things that, to a non-sufferer, seem trivial - being late for appointments, or not finishing homework. To the sufferer these problems seem insurmountable and, as a result, they often feel tense, irritable and can't sleep.

However, until now it was not known why some people suffer from any of these kinds of panic disorder. Initially researchers thought that a chemical produced in the brain triggered panic attacks, and that people who suffer from panic disorder produce excessive amounts of this chemical.



James Stewart in Hitchcock's *Vertigo*: fear of heights is just one of the many kinds of anxiety caused by panic

MSI

Prof Nutt and his colleagues gave patients a drug, Flumazenil, to block the chemical, but found out that it made them worse. Flumazenil has no effect on people who are not prone to panic, yet sufferers experience extreme attacks, sometimes their most severe to date.

At the same time, a drug called Clonazepam was discovered - this suppressed panic attacks and was known to work on the GABA system. GABA is gamma-butyric acid, which acts as a natural calming chemical, suppressing feelings of panic: reducing GABA increases anxiety.

Nutt's hypothesis was that the GABA system might be malfunctioning in patients who are prone to panic. Together with Drs Andrea Malizia and Caroline Bell, also from Bristol University, and a team of researchers from Hammersmith Hospital, he took PET scans of patients who had been given Flumazenil. What these brain scans showed was that those people who suffered from panic attacks had abnormal GABA receptors, especially in parts of the brain associated with anxiety such as the temporal lobes and the orbitofrontal cortex.

The receptors that were there did not bind with GABA efficiently.

Prof Nutt's theory looks as if it might be correct: people who are prone to panic do not have fully functioning GABA receptors, either because they were born that way - and evidence from animals shows that those which have altered GABA receptors are more anxious - or they have induced this brain state themselves. Alcohol, for example, initially increases GABA, but once drinking ceases, GABA release is inhibited. Stress also decreases GABA.

Nutt and Bell are now working on

a range of drugs to treat panic disorders. Like Prozac, these drugs increase the brain's natural levels of serotonin. The two most effective drugs tested so far are Paroxetine and Citalopram. Work that is currently underway suggests that regulating serotonin is important, but Prof Nutt is unsure whether GABA is affected by the drugs themselves, or as a result of the altered amounts of serotonin. Either way, it looks as if the study of panic may finally become a respectable science and those people who suffer from panic attacks can be helped.

UPDATE

FARMERS IN India have destroyed a plot of genetically engineered cotton by uprooting and burning it, in what they called "a message to all those who have invested in Monsanto to take their money and get out". The cotton, resistant to bollworm and produced by the US biotech giant, was in one of 40 locations around India where it is being tested to check for escape of pollen. An official for the Indian Department of Biotechnology said the farmers' action was unwarranted: "The trials posed no bio-safety concern," he told *Nature* magazine. Transgenic potatoes, tomatoes, cauliflowers and tobacco with bollworm-resistant genes are also in trials.

A DRUG to control epilepsy, which has also shown promise in treating cocaine addiction, could help smokers as well, according to a team from Brookhaven National Laboratory in New York. Experiments on animals showed that the drug - gamma vinyl-GABA, or GVG - reduces the effect of nicotine on the brain by slowing the production of dopamine, the neurotransmitter central to drug addiction. GVG blocked dopamine's effects for up to 12 hours. "Nicotine doubles the brain's dopamine level, sending a rush of pleasure and a signal that you should smoke again," said Stephen Dewey, a neuroanatomist. "But an appropriate dose of GVG taken before nicotine exposure can completely block nicotine's effects." The work was reported in the journal *Synapse*.

THE REASON you have not seen many pictures or data recently from the Galileo spacecraft, currently orbiting Jupiter's moon Europa, is that it has gone into its self-protective "safe" mode during two of its three flybys of the icy body. Scientists at Nasa are now working on a software fix for the problem, which they think is caused by increased radiation as it comes close to Jupiter. Galileo, launched in 1989, has already received 50 per cent more radiation than it is designed for.

A HUGE extinct volcano could be hidden under the west Antarctic ice sheet, suggest American scientists. They say they have found a "caldera" - the rock formation created by the collapse of a volcano's central regions into the empty magma chamber after an eruption. *New Scientist* reports that the caldera is about 70km across, and probably erupted "within the past 20 million years". If confirmed, it would be one of the world's largest extinct volcanoes. There is no danger of its returning to life, scientists say.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN the ways artists and the rest of us view the world have been detected by scientists investigating the brain activity of people who were asked to sketch faces while lying in a magnetic resonance imaging machine. The scanner, which measures blood flow in different areas of the brain, can accurately monitor the activity levels. Most of the cerebral activity of the non-artists was at the back of the brain, in the area that deals with visual processing, according to Bob Solso of the University of Nevada, in Reno. But in the case of Humphrey Ocean, a British portrait painter, the activity was centred on the right, frontal region, which is usually associated with higher thought processes, reports *New Scientist*. "It appears the artist is 'thinking' the painting as much as he is 'seeing' the painting," Dr Solso said.

IF THE euro ever makes an appearance in Britain, the Royal Mint should make every effort to avoid making the coins out of zinc. A study in the US, where some one-cent coins are made of zinc coated in copper, has found that zinc-based coins can cause stomach ulcers in children who swallow them. Coins made from copper or nickel generally pass through the digestive system untouched, but doctors at Duke University Medical Centre in Durham, North Carolina, found that a two-year-old boy suffered severe problems after a coin he had swallowed began to dissolve in his stomach. After he complained of pain, the doctors took X-rays and detected a metal disc full of holes. It was a 1989 coin that he had swallowed four days earlier.

CHARLES ARTHUR/STEVE CONNOR

TECHNOQUEST

Q How strong is an ant?
Ants can carry up to 50 times their own body weight on their backs, and their pincers can grip something 1,400 times their weight. By contrast, even the strongest humans can lift only a few times their own weight.

Q How does the brain work?
The brain is far more complex than even the biggest supercomputers and there is still a lot we don't know about it. An average brain weighs 3lb (1.4kg) and contains about 100 billion nerve cells - about the same number as there are stars in the Milky Way. Each nerve cell has between 1,000 and 10,000 connections with other nerve cells, which are mediated by special chemicals. The number and pattern of connections in use at any one time depends on what we are doing. After the age of 20, our brains lose about 0.03 ounces (1 gram) in weight per year as nerve cells die and are not replaced. Luckily, some nerve cells duplicate tasks - so we don't lose function at once.

Q How do we hear sound waves?
The outer ear collects sounds which have been carried as pressure waves in the air. These waves make the eardrum (or tympanum) vibrate. Three small bones connected to the eardrum, called the ossicles, amplify the vibrations and pass them on to the cochlea. The cochlea looks like a snail and is filled with liquid and lined by super-sensitive hairs. When vibrations hit the cochlea, the liquid inside starts to move, causing some of the hairs to sway. The movement of the hairs activates nerves attached

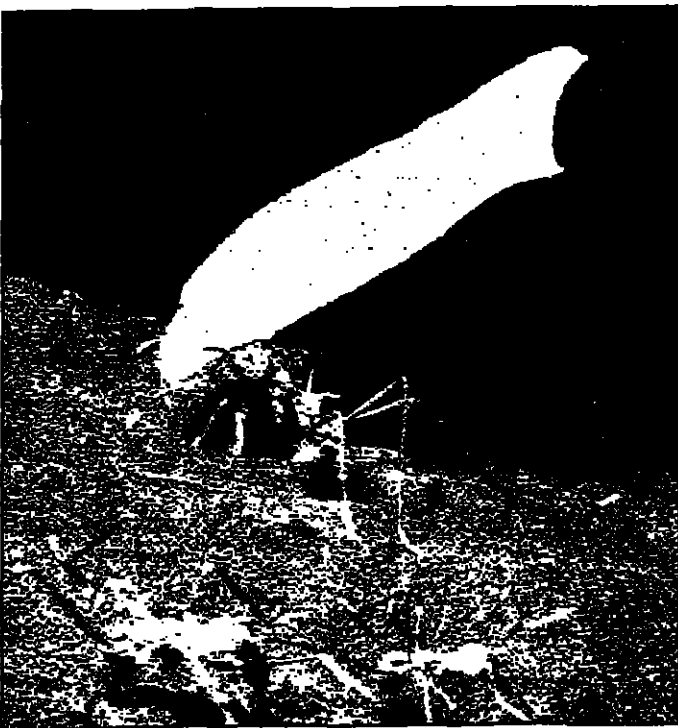
to their bases, sending electrical signals to the brain where they are decoded into voice patterns, music and so on.

Q What is the smallest bird?
The bee hummingbird, *Mellisuga helenae*, of Cuba and the Isle of Pines, measures about 2.5 inches long (57mm), half of which is taken up by the bill and tail, and weighs 0.05 ounces (1.6 grams). The females are slightly larger.

Q Why do the tails of comets look curved?
Comets in fact have two tails - ions, formed from charged particles forced off the "dirty snowball" of the surface, and dust, released as the ice melts on the approach to the Sun. The ion tail is straight, and usually

points away from the Sun. It is the dust tail that is curved. The particles that comprise it vary in size and velocity of ejection. The smaller ones, about a micron in size, experience the additional effects of radiation pressure, a repulsive force that can change the particle's orbit around the Sun. Rather than being part of the main body of the comet, they are falling independently with their own momentum. The effect is that dust particles making up the tail are moving in different orbits, all similar to the comet's, but subtly different enough to give the characteristic curve.

Visit the Technoquest World Wide Web site at <http://www.sciencenet.org.uk>. Questions and answers by Dial-a-Scientist on 0345 600444



Ants can carry up to 50 times their own body weight

THE TRUTH ABOUT... SYSTEMATICS

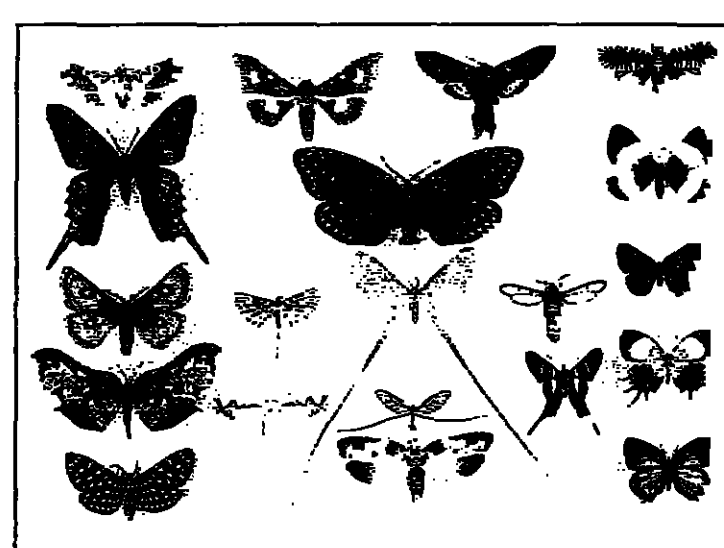
CONSIDER THIS: about 10 per cent of all the species that have ever lived since life on Earth began nearly 4 billion years ago are alive today. Out of the estimated 13 million species existing now, only 1.7 million are known to science.

The rate at which species are becoming extinct owing to human activity on the planet is between 1,000 and 10,000 times greater than the average extinction rates it has experienced over the past hundreds of millions of years.

Life on Earth is dying out faster than we can record it. Up to 10 per cent of the species of animals and plants alive today will be history within the next quarter-century. Most of these will become extinct without ever having been described and given names. To quote Edward O Wilson, the great evolutionary biologist, who says it is imperative to finish mapping the biosphere: "The most compelling reason for the broadening of goals is that, unlike the rest of science, the study of biodiversity has a time limit."

Systematics is the name given to the field of biology devoted to discovering, describing, naming and classifying organisms, whether they are living, or extinct fossils. "Without taxonomy to give shape to the bricks, and systematics to tell us how to put them together, the house of biological science is a meaningless jumble," according to Robert May, the distinguished Oxford biologist who has made a study of the world's biodiversity.

Systematics - the naming of animals and plants - may sound boring, but it is essential for learning about how living organisms relate to one another. "By devising a single agreed system of scientific names, it enables people around the world to communicate with each other about the diversity of life on Earth," says the UK Systematics Forum, a group representing the



Moths, butterflies and other insects are rapidly dying out. NHM

leading British players in the field. The Natural History Museum in London, which has one of the most extensive collections of animals and plants in the world, argues the case for spending time and money on identifying new species in a report, *The Web of Life*, which is published this week. "The crucial message that we all depend on a healthy, functioning natural environment has received near-universal support," the report says.

One of the best examples of how systematics can be of immense practical value occurred 10 years ago when the museum was asked to identify the larva of a fly. It turned out to be the New World screwworm, a serious pest in America because of its habit of burrowing into the skin of livestock. What made this identification so important was that the specimen in question had come from Libya, and was the first documented case of the insect appearing in North Africa.

The £50 test to identify the worm triggered a £50m eradication pro-

gramme to stop the pest gaining a foothold on the African continent. "Although the campaign appeared costly, an independent economic assessment of the costs and benefits of the eradication campaign estimated the return on investment to be in the region of 50:1 for north Africa alone," the museum says.

Mary Gibby, associate keeper of botany at the museum and a member of the UK Systematics Forum, said that the screwworm story is a perfect illustration of the necessity of investing in systematics. There are also untold practical benefits for discovering new medicines and drugs from unknown species of plants and micro-organisms, she adds.

The other important aspect, she points out, is conservation. Since 1982, 70 new species of lichen and more than 100 species of parasitic wasp new to Britain have been recorded. "You've got to identify what you've got before you can work out how to protect it," Dr Gibby says.

STEVE CONNOR

Bright lights, big city

New York is home to a growing pack of British film-makers. Who don't talk to each other. By Alissa Quart

Drawn to the New York of Scorsese, Cassavetes and Jarmusch, there's a group of young British film-makers forsaking home and LA for Manhattan. These documentarians, producers and editors are collectively marinating in Manhattan life, and also collectively avoiding each other.

The producer Sarah Teale's eyes glimmer when describing the ravages of a notorious psychiatric hospital in lower Manhattan, called Bellevue. "Yesterday, we filmed a woman breaking a glass showcase, screaming, in order to steal a photo of Clinton," she says. The work for the cable channel HBO, complements her other documentary projects for Channel 4 and the BBC.

"A quite beautiful ballet dancer was standing around and I asked him what he was doing. He said: 'Stretching.' He had just gone totally mad in the past year. I've seen incredibly scary, horrible things at Bellevue. I like film-making when it scares me." There was a problem, though, with the gritty vérité. It turned out that another British filmmaker, Nicholas Barker, had already used one of the Bellevue patients under consideration for

Teale's project. Before being institutionalised, the patient was one of the four protagonists in Barker's *Unmade Beds*. The fictional documentary is a cruel look at these singles, but it takes a darkly adoring view of its fifth protagonist - Manhattan.

But it's not just the call of the naked city with its "freaks, fairies and bad people" that keeps the expatriates here. Most of the exiles see their decision to move to New York as an economic one. "You can survive on television documentaries here, whereas in Britain you can starve to death waiting for a phone call," says Susan Brand. She arrived in New York a year and a half ago from her life as a television producer and editor in London. She was escaping, she said, "decades of European melancholy". Soon, Brand recognised that her under-appreciated National Film School and BBC experience made her an excellent job candidate for US cable channels. "However unpleasant working at the BBC was for me and others, it's very prestigious, and the credentials helped me get work," she says.

Other immigrants work on feature film crews, such as an East End-born editor who in his off hours films his own science-fiction Western based on the Book of Revelation.

Still others pick up odd jobs, such as managing buildings, or gardening, just so that they can survive and film in New York city.

David Evans worked as a producer while labouring for five years on a documentary about the Lower East Side's community gardens, tracing them through a year when many were being destroyed by the city to sell the sites or build housing. His film, *Dirt*, is a curious mixture of vérité and immaculate, Peter Greenaway-esque formalism. Schoolchildren frolic with ladybirds; squatters dig at the concrete with pickaxes; a man fertilises his garden with his own faeces.

Evans screened his documentary

in a Lower East Side storehouse of "alternative transportation" bicycle cabs. Though America's Green Party is still a mere seedling, it seemed alive and well here. Evans, who studied phenomenology at Oxford before writing his first American screenplay, "a sex romp featuring Queen Elizabeth's astronomer", gave the loamy crowd a slight sneer. "This is the great glory of America. Anyone who really wants to can make a film. I identified with these disenfranchised gardeners and I made a film about them. I see this as marking a life change, as well. I've said goodbye to all the 18th-century malarkey I was encrusted with in England."

Teale also feels that working in New York has helped her career. "I'd never have started my own production company, as a woman, in London," she says. She could not have got her latest film off the ground at home. "Legally, they would never let us film extensively in a mental hospital," she says. "If anyone sees this documentary in Britain, they'll never believe that's really how it is." Teale and others see New York as imbued with drama, but also as a "friendly" place. "It took years for the man at the corner shop to say 'Hello' in London. Here, the deli guy and I say 'Hello' every day. People are far less ironic in New York," she marvels.

Brand is not oblivious to the difficulties facing American

documentary film-makers who can seem "pretty bitter and" from trying to scrape together funding from private foundations. Evans says that making his film has been an endless struggle of patching funding together.

Clearly, most British film immigrants try their best to avoid the financial woes of independent filmmaking: there are more in Los Angeles than in New York, Boston and Philadelphia combined. They choose to live as close as possible to the famous film actors, extremely well paid animators and leading directors. But those who move to New York are looking for a piece of

the city's soiled authenticity - or a deal with HBO. One film-maker says he was obsessed with *Thelma & Louise*, and knew that he wanted to stay in New York and work after he walked around the city's largest bus terminal and saw that it shared that Seventies masterpiece's "balcony quality". "It was like a war zone," he says with delight. "Threatening and cinematic."

While these film-makers may be seeking *déshabille*, even violent, urban imagery, one thing they are certainly not looking for is each other. "I went to a film screening here full of Brits, an ex-pat old-school crowd calling each other 'George'," winces Brand. "I almost threw up."



Jim Robbins

The hottest show in town reaches boiling point

SOMETHING extraordinary has happened to *Chicago*. This shimmering sleazy, thrillingly heartless smash 'n' grab on truth, justice and the American way is still the hottest show in town, but it just got better.

Walter Bobbie's world-wide hit revival focuses upon the cynical yet startlingly contemporary alliance between criminal guilt and glamour, as two "merry murderers" of the Cook County Jail court celebrity, as it were, and walk free. Dressed in what looks like a cross between Donna Karan eveningwear and up-market underwear, a new cast struts its stuff and paws the ground with all the seductive hauteur of a pack of lyxes on heat.

Dripping sex and decadence, the

entire show is a giant come-on, but where the original company merely dazzled, the newcomers reveal previously hidden depths. A year ago, this came across as a cynical production of a brilliantly cynical show. Fascinatingly, *Chicago* now has a heart of darkness.

The secret is in the casting. Last year, it was all star turns. Now we are seeing a properly told story. Ute Lemper attacked the role of Velma like a whirling dervish. With cheekbones you could hang your wardrobe on and legs that went on for days, her sheer force threw you back into your seat. But after 10 minutes, you were dying for someone to turn her volume down. She seemed pathologically unable to use understatement.

MUSICAL CHICAGO ADELPHI THEATRE LONDON

By contrast, the smouldering, Amazonian Nicola Hughes majors in irony. She is deliciously incongruous as she switches between sneering grandeur and comic disingenuousness. There is now much more going on than just raging jealousy at the arrival of Roxie, the latest notorious killer-on-the-make.

Her voice pumps out John Kander's music and she also fleshes out Fred Ebb's tremendous, tart lyrics. There is little dialogue in the show's lean, mean structure but

what is there has to work, and it now does, big time. Hughes blessedly plants gags with wonderful aplomb. This is not just a performance, it is a character, and much funnier.

Diane Langton is on fine snarling form as the keeper of the clink, and Clarke Peters is sublimely relaxed as the shy lawyer, running the sham trial with ease or soft-shoeing it through Ann Reinking's Fosse-inspired choreography.

Dance, of course, is the core element of *Chicago*, dramatising and dictating the tone and temperature of the entire show. When it was announced that Maria Friedman was taking over as Roxie, the big question was: could she dance it? No worries. Snapping the brim of her

bowler and kicking up her heels, she is sensational. In her magnetic solo, she loses herself in a fantasy of ego, humming ecstatically to herself, and her arousal fills the theatre. Her voice shimmers breathily and her character's dream of stardom is thrillingly made flesh.

Better still is the scene in which she meets her husband - beautifully played by Peter Davison - after she is released. In her moment of triumph she has been abandoned by the press. Her eyes widen in the darkness and her voice cracks as she whispers: "They didn't even want my picture." A tiny moment, but shockingly touching. You thought you knew *Chicago*? Look again.

DAVID BENEDICT



'Chicago': you thought you knew it? Look again

TEL: 0171 293 2222

FAX: 0171 293 2505

CLASSIFIED

Legal Notices

ALEXANDER HOUSE
EVENTIDE HOME - R207241
Ref: FK-7097-CD(Ldn)
The Charity Commission proposes to make a Scheme for this charity. (A Scheme is a legal document made by the Charity Commission to replace, amend or add to the trusts of a charity.)
A copy of the draft Scheme can be seen at: 27 Tavistock Square, London WC0H 9TH, or a copy can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to: The Charity Commission, St. Alban's House, 57-61 Haymarket, London SW1V 4JQ, quoting the above reference number.
Comments or representations on these proposals can be made at writing to the Charity Commission within one month from the date of this notice.
Date: Friday 4th December 1998

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
CRAFTWOOD TRADING LIMITED
REGISTERED NUMBER: 3300452
Pursuant to Section 46(1) of the Insolvency Act 1986 and Rule 3.2 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 the notice for the meeting of the Creditors of the above named Company will be held at The Quality Scottish Corner Hotel, Junction 25, Wellington Street, London E10 4NR, on 10th December 1998 at 2.15pm for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 of the Insolvency Act 1986.
A list of the names and addresses of the Company's Creditors may be inspected free of charge between 10.00am and 5.00pm at the offices of the Liquidator, 33 Wellington Street, London E10 4NP, on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting.
Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must (unless they are individual creditors attending in person) ensure their proxies are received at 33 Wellington Street, London E10 4NP, no later than midday on the business day preceding the date of the meeting.
Dated December 2nd 1998
By Order of the Board
D. Chaston, Director

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
NOTICE OF MEETING OF CREDITORS
FROG SECURITY LIMITED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the Creditors of the above named Company will be held at 63 Waller Road, Swansea SA1 4PT, on Wednesday the 2nd day of December 1998 at 3.00 o'clock in the afternoon for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 of the Insolvency Act 1986.
On the two business days falling next before the day on which the meeting is to be held, a list of the names and addresses of the Company's Creditors will be available for inspection free of charge at the offices of Staines Jones & Walter Road, Swansea SA1 4PT, being a place in the relevant locality.
Dated the 30th day of November 1998
By Order of the Board of Directors
J. L. REES, Director

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
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In Liquidation
TAKE NOTICE THAT I, David John Mason of Morton Thorne & Co., Solicitors, 27 Finsbury Hill, 4, Albion, Huddersfield, AL1 1HD was appointed Liquidator of Greenway Cash and Carry Limited by a resolution of a meeting of the company's creditors held on 20th November 1998.
DAVID JOHN MASON, Liquidator

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
ADVERTISE MARKETING LIMITED
In Liquidation
TAKE NOTICE THAT I, David John Mason of Morton Thorne & Co., Solicitors, 27 Finsbury Hill, 4, Albion, Huddersfield, AL1 1HD was appointed Liquidator of Greenway Cash and Carry Limited by a resolution of a meeting of the company's creditors held on 20th November 1998.
DAVID JOHN MASON, Liquidator

Legal Notices

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NOTICE OF MEETING OF CREDITORS
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A list of the names and addresses of the Company's Creditors may be inspected free of charge between 10.00am and 5.00pm at the offices of the Liquidator, 33 Wellington Street, London E10 4NP, on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting.
Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must (unless they are individual creditors attending in person) ensure their proxies are received at 33 Wellington Street, London E10 4NP, no later than midday on the business day preceding the date of the meeting.
Dated December 2nd 1998
By Order of the Board
D. Chaston, Director

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
ADVERTISE MARKETING LIMITED
In Liquidation
TAKE NOTICE THAT I, David John Mason of Morton Thorne & Co., Solicitors, 27 Finsbury Hill, 4, Albion, Huddersfield, AL1 1HD was appointed Liquidator of Greenway Cash and Carry Limited by a resolution of a meeting of the company's creditors held on 20th November 1998.
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MUSIC

Black apocalypse

The end of the world is nigh, say the superstars of hip hop – but not for everyone. The Five Per Cent Nation will survive. How do we know? Just listen between the lines. By Martin James

Millennium fever. According to our own professional teenager Robbie Williams, it represents little more than an invitation to come and have a go if you think you're hard enough. For many of the world's leading hip hop artists, however, the year 2000 promises little more than death, destruction and copious quantities of pestilence along the way.

Leading this obsession with the apocalypse are clown prince of hip hop Busta Rhymes and Wu Tang Clan's Method Man and RZA, whose respective new albums offer bleak visions of post-millennial doom, albeit wrapped up in huge amounts of b-boy posturing and crew-on-crew attitude.

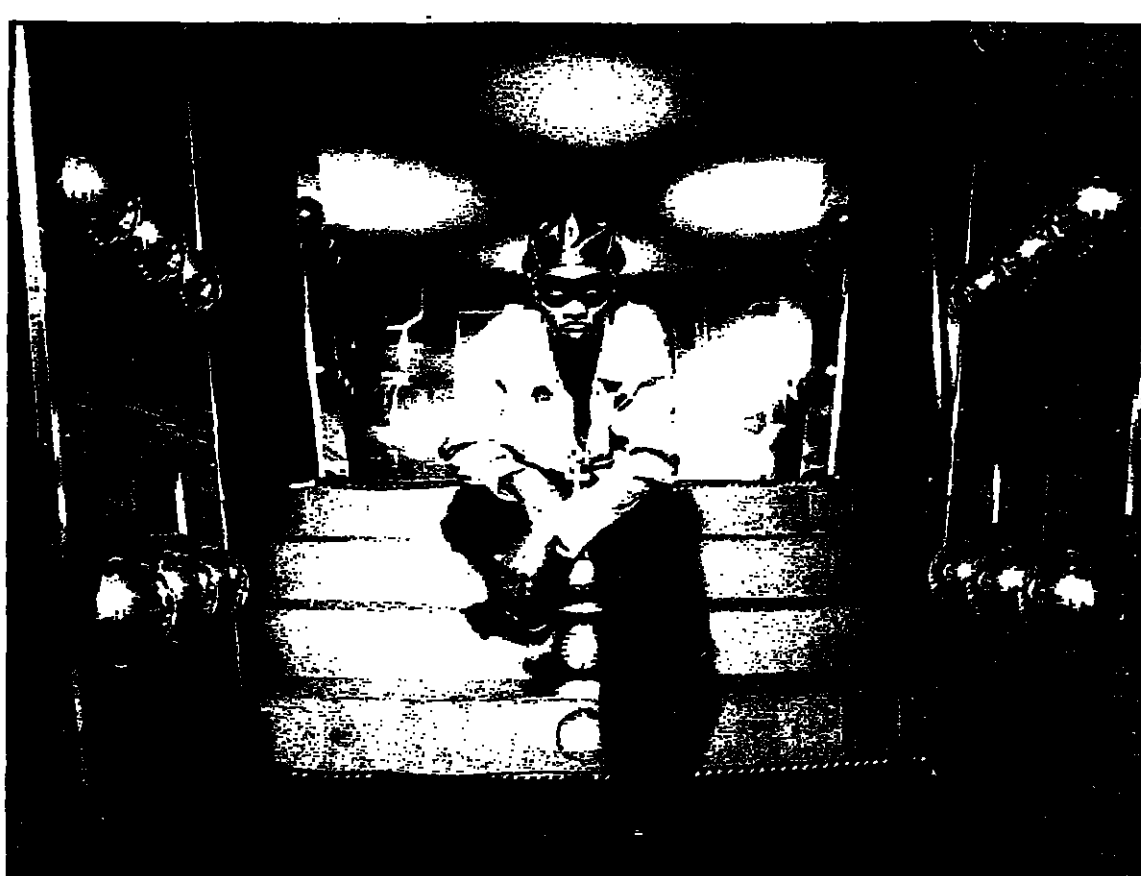
To anyone with a passing interest in these unlikely prophets, there is nothing surprising about the subject matter of their albums. RZA and Method Man have long explored "eve of destruction" conspiracy theories, both in their Wu Tang and extra-curricular guises, with a vivacity worthy of Mr Illuminati himself. Robert Anton Wilson. Busta Rhymes, on the other hand, has promoted the "inevitable end" since his days with the early Nineties, Public Enemy-inspired group, Leaders of the New School.

In common with a number of high profile hip hop artists, RZA, Method Man and Busta continually allude to such conspiracy theories, many of which are drawn from fact and then interpreted with a leap of the imagination. For instance, the documented experiments on the black males of the US town of Tuskegee, who were unknowingly injected with syphilis over a number of years in order to observe the effects of the virus on a small community. With the onset of Aids, and the allegedly disproportionate number of black male sufferers, theories quickly arose to suggest that HIV was similarly racially tested.

However, a greater leap of imagination is required for the alien conspiracies favoured by a number of hip hop's leading figures. Apparently, aliens will return to reclaim their native earth in the near future. Part of the repossession process is Hollywood's promotion of alien blockbusters – such as *Independence Day* – which are supposedly preparing mankind for the inevitable.

For Busta Rhymes, Method Man and RZA, such theories go way beyond conspiracy and into religion. Like fellow artists Canibus, Rakim, Queen Latifah and Erykah Badu, both Busta and his Flipmode Squad, and Method Man and RZA's Wu Tang Clan, are followers of the secularised Islamic sect, the Five Per Cent Nation. Like the followers of the Nation of Islam, they consider extraterrestrial life to be a part of God's great design, as is the earth's great day of reckoning. The similarities end there.

The Five Per Cent Nation was founded by the ex-Nation of Islam follower, Clarence "13X" Smith, in Harlem in 1964. Their teachings are drawn from a combination of Egyptology, numerology and biology. Fundamental to this belief system is the notion that God exists within the self,



Final countdown: clockwise from top, RZA as Bobby Digital, Busta Rhymes and Method Man

and that 85 per cent of the global population is heading for cataclysmic doom. Of the remaining population, 10 per cent (the governments etc) already hold the truth about what lies in store, while the final five per cent are the chosen ones.

Few artists who follow the Five Per Cent Nation seem prepared to discuss the subject in any great depth. Furthermore, although their lyrics hint at a greater theory, rarely do they seem to be anything more than empty rhetoric. The complicated ideas of the Five Per Cent seem to have been dumbed down to suit the needs of rap's superstars. In the US magazine *Spin*, Busta Rhymes argues that this is all about getting across to as many people as possible. In his pre-MTV days, he made no such concessions.

"There are different levels of intelligence and many different ways of getting that intelligence across. Unfortunately, the motherfucker on the

street who lives and dies for hip hop just wasn't with that (Leaders of the New School) poetic shit."

RZA has a far more effective argument when dealing with the question. While in London recently to promote his latest album – recorded under the alias Bobby Digital – he declared: "We don't need to talk shit 'cos then they don't know what we're planning. If they know that we're down with they plans then they'll come back at us. So we keep it tight."

Such reticence presents a quandary. The Five Per Cent Nation presents its teachings as a series of "degrees" of knowledge. There are 120 degrees that all members have to learn. Beyond this, there are "plus degrees" – spurious knowledge, if you like – which make up many of the conspiracy theories. The problem lies in the fact that none of these degrees, from 120 on, are actually written down. They are passed on in the oral

tradition, an obvious attraction for hip hop's rappers.

But if these rappers are dropping lyrics which seem to have little substance, how can they pass on the knowledge? Old skool rapper and long-standing Five Per Cent-er Rakim, says you have to read between the lines. "Word is born. Like years ago, the slaves'd play a beat on the drums, a certain rhythm, and the whole village would know what was going on. That's just the way I like to drop my science – subliminally, but right there for a minute. Even the Bible and the Koran, it's right there for you, but it might take somebody 10 times to read one paragraph to understand it. So you gotta read in between the lines..."

In this context, millennial concept albums seem almost obligatory. Enter Busta Rhyme's third album, *Extinction Level Event* (The Final World Front) (EastWest) follows on 7 December

an extremely graphic comic-book message of destruction. Similarly, Method Man's latest album, *Tical 2000 – Judgment Day*, kicks off with a New Year countdown. As the call of "Happy New Year" rings out, the bomb drops, right on cue.

The bomb, of course, is metaphorical. Neither of these artists believes that the world will end in Hollywood fire and brimstone. In keeping with Five Per Cent beliefs, it will collapse in a whirlpool of self-created chaos. Busta prophesies: "Stock market crash, computer virus, no democratic system after this term. I think of rap music being taken away by law."

And here lies the immediate factor which ties hip hop to the conspiracies of millennial doom. The idea that rap music, as the vessel of all teachings, is so powerful that it will become outlawed. This is the main concern behind RZA's latest offering. RZA, as Bobby Digital in *Stereo*, presents a story of b-boy past, present and future locked into a battle with corporate industry over the fate of hip hop. In a re-run of the rape of the blues, major industries have systematically taken hip hop and bleached it corporate-white. Bobby Digital is here to take it back underground. Allegedly.

It's due to such concerns that so many hip hop artists now run their own small empires. RZA's Wu Tang Clan has developed into a stable of solo artists. They also run their own perfume emporium, clothing line, comic books and, in the case of the Bobby Digital concept, a forthcoming break into film is on the cards as well. Similarly, Busta Rhymes has recently started Flipmode Entertainment with his own clothing concern and solo albums from his affiliated artists. Indeed, where once hip hop obsessed about East versus West and gang-against-gang violence, now they're developing their own self contained industries. Corporate gangs no less. Hip hop's first hostile takeover album may be just around the corner.

With hip hop long offering the most attractive escape route from the inner city ghettos, it comes as little surprise that rappers consider the control of their business to be paramount to their cause. As Busta Rhymes says: "If that (millennium bug) isn't fixed by the year 2000, we're gonna be fucked up... when it hits, man, I ain't trying to be the motherfucker that's too late, fighting my way up outta the shit. I want to have a self-sufficient system and be ready for all of that."

So with hip hop reclaimed, the chosen few appear to be walking into the next millennium like conquering heroes. The remaining 95 per cent, however, look set to disappear in a quagmire of computer virus, system-breakdown and endemic corruption – Armageddon, as prophesied in every religious text known to mankind. Not even Robbie Williams is hard enough to deal with that.

RZA as Bobby Digital in Stereo (Cee Street) and *Method Man's Tical 2000 – Judgment Day* (Def Jam) are both out now. Busta Rhymes' *Extinction Level Event* (The Final World Front) (EastWest) follows on 7 December

LYRIC SHEETS MARTIN NEWELL

Ozzy Osbourne, 50 this week, has taken up gardening. The problem is that he gardens at night. This has annoyed his neighbours, who object to the 17 four-metre-high lights which he has erected in his garden.

Ozzy Osbourne's Garden



The moon's a stalag searchlight
The sky's an orange glow
The lawn's lit up by lasers
Like a Sabbath stadium show
By a listed Queen Anne building
Near a former Quaker hall
A tattooed man is digging
Beside a garden wall...

And as the cheery rocker
Totes shotgun through his grounds
Some badgers run for cover
He looses off two rounds
A bat caught in the crossfire
Falls lifeless from a tree
The singer's patient missus
Shouts "Oz, d'you want yer tea?"

The heavy metal rose-grower
Finds secateurs no good
And much prefers a chainsaw
When pruning out dead wood.
Though sprays can be effective
For blackfly, Ozzy's learned
That cherry-bombs work better
Where cherries are concerned

A rock god takes up gardening
Two different worlds collide
The neighbours' dogs won't settle
The cats are terrified
The king of heavy metal
Is getting into stride.
A drum of Agent Orange
And flamethrower by his side

...Happy birthday, Ozzy

Meeting people is easy.

A film by Grant Gee about Radiohead.



Grant Gee, the director of no surprises, spent a year on the road and behind the scenes with Radiohead. *Meeting people is easy* is a 90 minute collage of previously unseen footage – including shows in Barcelona, Paris, New York and Tokyo.

Meeting people is easy.
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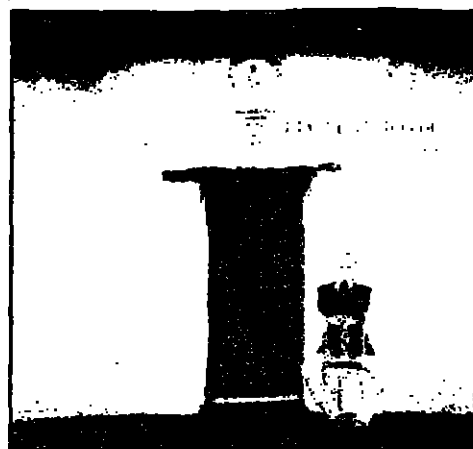
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THIS WEEK'S ALBUM RELEASES

REVIEWED BY ANDY GILL



DAVE ALVIN
Blackjack David
Hightone

ONE OF the more interesting trends in modern American rock has been the drift back to simpler, folksy forms, as songwriters as diverse as Kurt Wagner, Gillian Welch, Bruce Springsteen and Beck seek a more direct, uncluttered connection with their roots. As singer and guitarist with The Blasters, Dave Alvin made one or two cracking R&B-fuelled rock'n'roll records back in the Eighties, but recent years have seen him work more and more as a solo folk-blues performer or as here, within the subtle settings devised by his producer, the multi-instrumentalist Greg Leisz.

Blackjack David, his latest album, illustrates the virtue of his revised approach. Alvin's songwriting has never been sharper, whether his characters are hymning the life of the road in "Abilene" and "New Highway", or regretting their dead-end small-town stasis in "From a Kitchen Table". The diversity of situations in these 11 songs is testament to his imagination, while the depth of character is sometimes painful to witness. Take the case of the patsy narrating the rural *Body Heat* scenario, "Mary Brown", who

finds himself helpless to resist when Mary sets him up to murder her husband. Even when she testifies against him, he admits he'd do it again; trapped by his desire, he's powerless to alter his fate.

We're all in much the same boat, Alvin suggests, just impotent hostages to our aspirations. Alvin's songs stand as a denial of the American Dream, speaking up instead for the deprived and dispossessed – people such as the Vietnam veteran in "1968", trying to live with impossible memories: "folks say he's a hero, but he'll tell you he ain't/He left the hero in the jungle back in 1968".

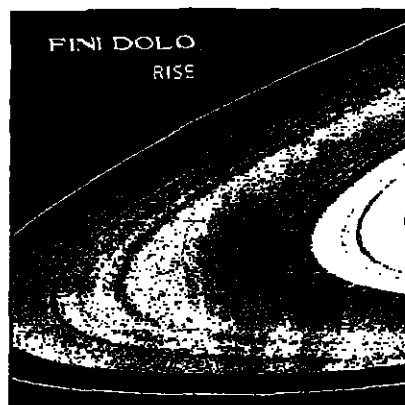
Tragedy stalks these songs. In "California Snow", a border guard observes the plight of immigrants caught short by seasonal change, as he finds a Mexican peasant carrying his dead wife. "The California summer sun can burn right through your soul, but in the winter you can freeze to death in the California snow." The implication is clear: we're all just sad wetbacks at heart, lured by the pathetic spectacle of Hollywood, but ill-prepared for the erosion of values it entails.



HONEYZ
Wonder No. 8
Mercury

I SUPPOSE there might be a less imaginative album released this year than the optimistically-titled *Wonder No. 8*, but whoever's making it will have to hurry up. Certainly, it would be difficult to conceive of a more listless assault on the girl-group formula than the Anglo-French trio Honeyz offer here. There's a strange, android feel about the way they strive to include every single one of the genre's clichés – the vapid answering machine "messages" that punctuate the tracks; the pointless lists of thanks in the CD booklet; never using one note where five can be squeezed in; and, particularly, the language of the songs themselves, a portfolio of cheap sexual promise rendered in alien phrases such as "freak me", probably the world's least sensual invitation.

In fact, if it weren't for Celeste, Heavenly – yes, Heavenly – and Naima's limitations as singers, they wouldn't really have much character at all. Sensibly, they've put the obvious hits – the likeable "Finally Found" and the slight but cute "Do Me Baby" – at the start of the album, but be warned; things deteriorate rapidly thereafter. Colonised soul music, for colonised souls.



FINI DOLO
Rise
Arctob

FINI DOLO is a collaboration between the UK house veteran Noel Watson and the New York poet Soja Soja, co-writer/co-star of the movie *Slim*. Together they've made one of the year's more arresting hip-hop offerings, with Watson's slick, spare jazz-rap arrangements providing a strong, expressive skeleton for Soja's smart, cool blank verse. She was bloodied in the Nuyorican Poetry Café scene, and her poems probe at the interface of the personal and the political, in terms appropriate to their targets. In one of several tracks criticising the "crystal pimp daddy capitalist" style of hip-hop vernacular, for instance, she raps: "If you gotta call my pussy something, call it God." Elsewhere, a sort of feminist Egyptocentrism is posited against the genre's prevailing violence and materialism, though that doesn't prevent her from summoning more authentic sensual language in one song ("Blow") than the Honeyz manage in an entire album. Like her fellow New Yorker Dana Bryant, Soja speaks loudly of worldly intimacies – and judging by the stark accounts of tracks such as "Hustle For Life", "Void" and "Journey", hers is a hard-won intelligence indeed.



TOM ZE
Fabrication Defect
Luaka Bop

TOM ZE who was a member of the Tropicalismo movement that revitalised Brazilian culture in the Sixties, remains as creative as ever. His third release for David Byrne's Luaka Bop label is a concept album whose individual tracks enumerate the welcome "defects" of personality – the appetites, desires and drives – that separate humans from robots. Behind the slightly corny notion lies a serious concern with the way those desires are increasingly manipulated by technological forces. Ze dedicates the album to the Third World underclass, who despite being "analphabetic", still continue to "think, dance and dream". "To think," explains the singer, "will always be considered an effrontery." Accordingly, he employs a wide range of sounds and methods, from the various Latin American rhythmic modes to fast, cyclical guitar parts in the African *soukous* style. It's a fascinating bazaar of sound, with surprises around every corner; never more so than when "O Olho Do Lago", a homage to concrete poetry, opens with the sound of an electric drill. Witty and passionate, *Fabrication Defect* has both head and heart in exactly the right place.



TIMBALAND
Tim's Bio: Life From Da Bassment
Virgin

TIM "Timbaland" Mosley is the current flavour-of-the-month producer in American urban/R&B circles, helming hits for the likes of Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott, Jay-Z, Aaliyah and Ginuwine. All four contribute to his solo debut, on which Timbaland seeks to showcase his "sound of the Dirty South" as a Southern equivalent of Puff Daddy's stable of rappers and singers.

Like most successful producers in this field, Timbaland has developed his own sound, using choppy beats and synth lines to create light, funky rhythms informed, but not dominated, by the staccato style of dancehall reggae.

His grooves manage to provide a versatile undercarriage for the vocalists, whether it's Ginuwine oozing his way lasciviously through "Keep It Real", or ghetto auteur Nas rapping on "To My". Timbaland himself raps on some tracks, with a deadpan, laid-back monotone style – except for when he adds a cartoonish, speeded-up high-register to the chorus of "I Get It On", as infectious a hip-hop cut as I've heard all year.

Fresh and forceful, it's certainly the Sound Of Young America, for the time being at least.

RIFFS

THE FIRST AND LAST RECORDS BOUGHT BY LOU BARLOW, LEAD SINGER OF SEBADOH

First record
Commander Cody and His Lost Airman: "Hot Rod Lincoln"
It was a one-hit wonder – surprised? I really liked it, but then I was only seven years old. It just seemed exciting. It's a very fast song about someone getting arrested for speeding. The

hook was a man saying to his son that it would drive him to drink if he carried on driving that hot rod Lincoln. It's a song with a real jocular guitar, rock-a-Billy style. It was the type of silly single I bought at that age, which is quite frightening because everything I hear has some influence on me.

Last Record
Johnny Cash: "Greatest Hits"
My parents had one Johnny Cash record, so I was introduced to him when I was a kid. This is an album of his earliest hits, very minimal music – stripped-down guitar, bass and drum. The songs are two minutes

long apiece and have very simple lyrics. His songs may all sound approximately the same, but I love them all.
INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER RODGER
Sebadoh release 'Flame' (Domino) on 18 January 1999, and play The Astoria, London on 19 January

Lessons in Americana

ON PAPER this looks like an interesting contrast between two groups of not-so-young men who know what it is to sit around the kitchen playing guitars, on opposite sides of the Atlantic. First up are the new Wigan pretenders, Witness, reportedly friends of Britain's arch balladeers The Verve (though, as they point out, "in Wigan, pretty much everybody knows someone who's out of The Verve").

It's fair to say that there's not exactly a riot going on – they're hardly the most forward of bands – but the four-piece shows enough promise to survive comparisons. The guitarist Ray Chan will certainly remind audiences of Nick McCabe, as much for his ability apparently to sit while in fact standing, as for his stylish slide technique, while the singer Gerard Starkie

LIVE
SON VOLT/WITNESS
LA2
LONDON

has a wide, warm range, already given to swoops into the bass register alongside Tim Buckley-esque flights of fancy. They play well within themselves, tempered perhaps by the fact that they've so far performed only a handful of shows, but there's enough room in the music, especially the pounding "So Far Gone" and the presumably untitled "68" to make them a tip for 1999. Tantalisingly tentative. From Motorway 61 revisited to the real thing. The New Orleans-based Son Volt are exemplars of American alternative country, for which read "possessors of lap steel guitar

and college degrees in arts rather than marketing". They were formed from the ashes of the critical favourites Uncle Tupelo – the other half became that bar band *par excellence* Wilco (crowdy, catchy, straightforward, sounding exactly like their influences). The founder, Jay Farrar has followed a more thoughtful path. Farrar, whose vocals and haircut resemble that of The Byrds' lost genius, Gene Clark, stands stock still at stage centre, as they purvey a doggedly relentless form of Americana-tinged rock.

"Straightface" might as well be called "Straightforward", as the drummer Mike Heidorn keeps up a strict rhythm for the first four songs, refusing to add emphasis to some of Dave Boquist's excellent lead playing. Things loosen up with the strum-along balladry of "Tear

Stained Eye", and when Boquist picks up the viola, though his punctuation is a reflection of his guitar work. In general, they lack the wonderful raggedness of such patent inspirations as Dylan's work with The Band, or early REM. While contemporaries such as Teenage Fanclub and The Jayhawks successfully vary their palette, probably owing to sharing the songwriting load, Son Volt wear thin, despite finishing strongly with favourites such as "Windfall" and "Caryatid Easy".

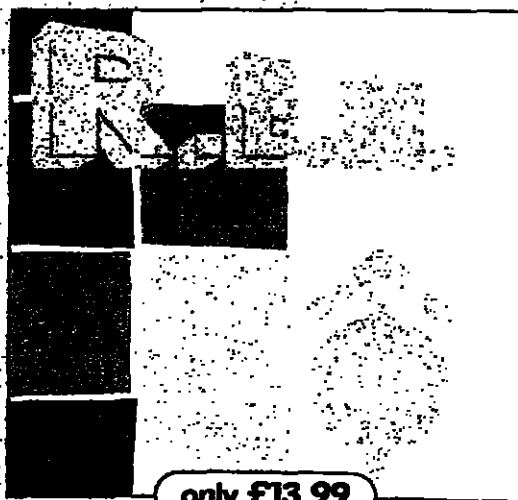
It's not until the encores – The Stooges' frenetic "I Got a Right" and the Del-Vettes' wonderfully obscure garage-rock classic, "Last Time Around" – that we finally see Farrar relaxed and growling, and showing the audience that a history lesson can be fun after all.
STEVE JELBERT

SLEEVE NOTES

THE EX-KENICKIE front person Lauren Laverne is a front-runner to replace Denise van Outen on Channel 4's *The Big Breakfast*. A glance at her CV reveals a whiff of the meeja star: a convent school upbringing; presenting experience via *The Alphabet Show*; a colourful vocabulary. Others in line for the job include Melanie Sykes, MTV's Jenny McCarthy, Sophie Dahl, Melinda Messenger and the former *Hollyoaks* star Davinia Taylor.

JUST DAYS after trashing his hotel room in a post-concert rampage, Marilyn Manson is accused of setting his bodyguards on a journalist from *Spin*, Craig Marks, executive editor of the alternative music mag, says he was grabbed by the throat, pulled up in the air and tossed against a wall by the shock rocker's goons following a concert at New York City's Hammerstein Ballroom. Marks, 37, charged Manson & Co with harassment and assault. NYPD is investigating. There's no immediate word from the Manson camp, who have become adept at "no commenting" on the singer's myriad controversies.
JENNIFER RODGER

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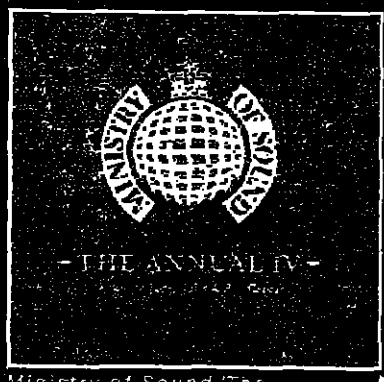
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سكرا من الاصل

It's the way he makes them up

An Oscar nomination and four solo albums – it's been a very good year for American songwriter Elliott Smith. By Andrew Mueller

ELLIOTT SMITH has a face that sometimes looks younger than his 29 years, and sometimes an awful lot older. His appearance is such that he must find it difficult to walk the streets without complete strangers offering him blankets, soup and spare change: he wears a permanently distracted, faraway air, a pale blue woollen hat pulled over his forehead, a black leather wristband of the sort that 15-year-olds buy along with their first heavy metal record, and a Rolling Stones T-shirt so threadbare, it probably dates from the last time anyone with functioning hearing and rudimentary aesthetic sense would conceivably have bought one.

Still, the Texas-born, Oregon-reared, Brooklyn-dwelling Smith isn't sitting in the lounge of a Hilton hotel waiting for a lift to the airport for his dress sense. He has had four solo albums released in Britain this year (*Elliott Smith*, *Roman Candle* and *Either/Or*), which had previously been available in the States, and a new album, *XO*, and has been the hero of an unlikely but undeniably cheering showbusiness fable: the songs he gave Gus Van Sant for his film *Good Will Hunting* earned Smith an Academy Award nomination and an invitation to play at the Oscars. It was hard to watch without feeling that any second some-

'Paintings make me more excited to write than books or songs do'

gentle, gorgeous, lonely songs that sound and read like views glimpsed through wet windows; Smith has the happy knack of writing the kind of song where you're not quite sure what it's about, but nonetheless know exactly what he means. It's telling that he describes what he does as "making up" rather than "writing" songs.

one was going to realise that there'd been a terrible mistake and heave him into the skips behind the venue.

"Oh, Celine Dion just represents more of the world than I do," says Smith, still philosophical in defeat. "And actually, she was really nice." Smith doesn't seem overjoyed about doing press, but he's amiable enough, though his answers tend to be as sketchy and impressionistic as his lyrics. *XO*, one of the few genuinely great albums to have blessed 1998, is a collection of

block, which represents the one thing that keeps coming up in someone's life. Regardless of where they live, or what they try to change about their situation, there are certain things that just keep on trailing you wherever you go. That's why I like his paintings; they're more permanent, more universal than some particular depiction of an object. If I could make up songs that were like those paintings, songs that have dispensed with details and objects... it's hard to do that with words, but it's kind of fun to try."

admitted heroes, Bob Dylan and, especially, Elvis Costello (the song contains distinct echoes of "Couldn't Call It Unexpected" and "Our Little Angel"), but mostly it's admirably subtle and evocative, and reinforces Smith's fondness for explaining his ambitions in terms of other media.

"I mean," he says, "I don't know much about visual art. It's more on a level of... I'll like how a painting is green and blue, and think it'd be cool to make up a song that sounds like it's green and blue. Paintings make me more excited to write than books or songs do."

Modest to a fault, Smith says the only real ambition he has is a contract that would allow him to make an album every six months, so as to accommodate his prolific output.

"Everyone's got a story," he shrugs, when asked to account for this. "The characters I like are someone real or imaginary who's finding some way round an obstacle, especially if the way they find to get around an obstacle is itself an obstacle... it's kind of a comparison between two problems. If it was all about me it would be really boring for me to sing. I already know how I feel."

The single, 'Waltz #2', is out now on Dreamworks. Elliott Smith is playing ULU tonight in London WC1 (0171 664 2030)



Elliott Smith: 'Celine Dion represents more of the world than I do'

Nicola Kurtz

Glittering grey marks on the fingerprint file

IN ONLY a few years, Jan Garbarek has moved from cult jazz saxophonist to renowned, barrier-busting voice of contemporary music. Although there have been landmarks along the way – principally his global bestseller, *Officium*, with The Hilliard Ensemble, which brought him his biggest audience – it's been a notably pa-

tient progress. If the timbre of his music has changed frequently, his instrumental voice remains as individual and recognisable as his fingerprints, and as inimitable as it was on his first ECM records, almost 30 years ago.

Where Garbarek has tried numberless combinations of players on his records, his

touring group has retained a constancy which suits him well. At the RFL, it was the familiar Garbarek gang of Eberhard Weber, whose basslines are as particular as the leader's; Rainer Brüninghaus on keyboards, a self-effacing texturalist; and, for the worldly kick which is Garbarek's secret vice, Marilyn Mazur on

drums and percussion. They are not a charismatic lot to look at, but there is an anticipatory chill when the leader fills his lungs to deliver that first in-

cantatory phrase. He really sounds like nobody else.

For much of the evening, though, the rigorous skirling of Garbarek's tenor and soprano was closely meshed with the other players: an ensemble rather than a soloist's meditation. The first 50 minutes was a seamless tracing of themes, from the lavish and expensive

new record, *Rites*, an impeccable demonstration of Garbarek's strength, and the habits which some might call failings. Many of his themes are no more than a melodic motif or deceptively simple progression. And he can find ways to pick at them for hours. This refinement, though, can seem barely a step away from palliative, New Age music.

He is fortunate to have Marilyn Mazur to put some iron into this mix. Even when tapping out the simplest tattoo on her mix of kit drums, bells, cymbals and shakers, the ear is constantly drawn to the vibrant precision of her playing. It leaves Weber and Brüninghaus to provide the lush, harmonic underpinnings, and they were rewarded

with extravagant solo interludes in the second half. But this is group-music jazz absorbed into a fine and rather private world view: that of Jan Garbarek's glittering grey voice.

A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper. RICHARD COOK

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The French connection

Poulenc and Messiaen evoke the extremes of 20th-century composition. But do they share more than a homeland? By **Bayan Northcott**

In the spring of 1945, as Paris struggled to resume the patterns of its pre-war musical life after the distortions of the German occupation, Francis Poulenc wrote to his old colleague Darius Milhaud, who had, meanwhile, sat out the conflict in distant California. "The rise of Messiaen has been the most important event. In fact, you will find a fanatical sect surrounding this musician who, for all the impossible literary jargon, is nevertheless remarkable. The Messiaenists are very much against Stravinsky's 'last period'. For them, Igor's music ends with *Le Sacre*. They booed *Les Danseuses Concertantes*, which I adore. But this makes things lively. This is what it is about."

It says much for Poulenc's perceptive open-mindedness that he so quickly sensed and, to a degree, accepted the necessity of a major shift in French musical culture that he must have realised would prove disadvantageous to his own aims and achievements – even if he had yet to identify the ringleader of the Messiaenists as an obstreperous 20-year-old called Pierre Boulez. Of course, Messiaen himself had already been around for some time. Born into a provincial family of serious artistic and spiritual endeavour – his mother was a religious poet – he entered the Paris Conservatoire aged only 11, studying with Dukas and duly carrying off all the prizes. But as a rising young composer in the Thirties, he had proved curiously difficult to "place". On the one hand, the systematic rigour of his rhythmic and modal techniques and the surrealistic imagery of the texts he wrote for himself to set seemed Modernist. On the other hand, his religious sentiment and sound seemed to come straight out of what was then regarded as the most conservative native tradition – the French Organ School.

Poulenc, at least, seems to have recognised Messiaen as something of an original, remarking: "Either one loves this music or one hates it, but it cannot be ignored, any more than the paintings of Rouault."

Messiaen, by contrast, must have regarded Poulenc as typical of the smart frivolity of inter-war Paris, against which he had already protested as a member of a short-lived composer group called *La Jeune France*, preaching a return to sincerity in art. Superbly trained himself, he may also have considered Poulenc a bit of a dilettante. Raised in a wealthy, cultivated *haute bourgeoisie* Parisian family, the latter early took to the piano, but owing to military call-up towards the



Francis Poulenc (right) on Olivier Messiaen: "Either one loves this music or one hates it, but it cannot be ignored"

end of the First World War, he missed out on a Conservatoire training – leaving him with what he acknowledged were technical limitations as a composer.

Unlike Messiaen 10 years later, however, Poulenc found almost instant success in his early twenties mainly because the insouciant, Sate-esque little pieces he came out with so perfectly epitomised the bright, positive, populist new spirit that Cocteau was calling for as a way out of Debussyan Impressionism, and which came to be associated with the loose grouping of composers, Poulenc among them, who were known as *Les Six*.

Such early typecasting as a musical gadfly had its disadvantages. By the time the French public had begun to realise that Poulenc was also capable of sacred settings of a touching simplicity, closer in spirit to *La Jeune France* than almost anything by Messiaen, and, moreover, that he had embarked upon a lyrical song recital partnership with the baritone Pierre Bernac ultimately as fruitful as that of Britten and Pears, the Second World War was upon them all.

All the same, to suggest that 1945 was the moment when the musical milieu of Poulenc was finally superseded by that of Messiaen

would be simplistic. For a start, Messiaen's religiosity was quite as suspect as Poulenc's in a post-war Paris buzzing with the Existentialism of Sartre. And although he had established himself as a composer of international standing by the time he had completed his vast, kaleidoscopic *Turangalila-Symphonie* in 1948, Messiaen's real influence was being exerted through his teaching.

A major theme of the analysis class Messiaen ran at the Conservatoire was evidently how the early moderns – Strauss, Schoenberg and Stravinsky – had opened up the most striking new possibilities in

rhythm, harmony, timbre and so on in the 1900s, and then had apparently taken fright, retreating into various forms of neo-classicism between the wars, leaving those possibilities still to be explored.

As transmuted by the young Boulez in a series of fierce polemics, this was to emerge as the central doctrine of the post-war avant garde: that henceforth every new work should involve a radical re-invention of the musical language itself. Around 1950, Messiaen himself was galvanised by his star pupil's eloquence into attempting a series of piano and organ pieces of a quite fearsome constructivism. But not for

long: soon he was off transcribing the songs of "God's musicians", the birds. And after 1960, his main concern was to amass all of his musical resources – the modes, the birdsong and the constructivism – into the grandly conceived, frieze-like sacred projects of his last three decades.

By then, Poulenc was dead, felled by a sudden heart attack in January 1963 – though from the avant-garde viewpoint he had ceased to matter years before, if he ever had.

Few today would be prepared to argue that Poulenc achieved anything like Messiaen's stature, let alone that, in certain ways, their

outputs were complementary. Yet Poulenc did not simply cease to evolve after 1945. On the contrary, he continued to admire Boulez ("a true musician"), and, in his magpie way, to appropriate clangorous sounds from the New Music – even, in his last choral work, *Sept Répons des Ténébreux* (1962), a patch of Weberian serialism.

Moreover, his three large post-war sacred works plus his opera *Les Dialogues des Carmélites* (1956) rather strikingly anticipated, as it were by contradiction, the later concerns of Messiaen.

We may deplore on grounds of taste or decorum the outrageous farago of musical eras and stylistic clashes that comprise the *Gloria* (1960) – inspired, Poulenc claimed, by medieval frescoes of angels sticking their tongues out and a vision of monks playing football. But in its evocation of spiritual joy, pain, naughtiness and penitence, the work rather specifically encompasses those "human" aspects of faith that are sedulously excluded from Messiaen's theological visions.

Ultimately, their relative standing may rest upon whether listeners continue to accept the historical view, fathered by Boulez out of Messiaen, that the inter-war years represented a temporary and regrettable surrender to the past in the Modernist programme of perpetual revolution, or whether those years are interpreted rather as the beginning of the post-modernist project of perpetually recomposing the past in terms of the present, as in Stravinsky's collage-like reanimating of traditional forms.

Messiaen's most radical innovation – his alternative concept of form, not as a dynamic process to be worked through, but as a series of durations to be filled in – has undoubtedly had a huge influence in recent decades, not least upon Boulez and Stockhausen.

Yet Poulenc's recurrent impulse throughout his career to push the Stravinskian approach to its extreme, cramming in unlikely juxtapositions of style and tone as if to test traditional notions of continuity of "the work" itself, to breaking-point, reveals a conceptual toughness beneath the irony and charm that could yet prove to be quite as salient.

Olivier Messiaen in his Century: Birmingham 90th Birthday celebrations, 10 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham (0121-212 3333), broadcast live on Radio 3; Poulenc Anniversary Series, 12 Dec to 25 Feb, Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, London W1 (0171-935 2141)

Saved for the nation

Radio 3 realises the worth of its output, while a sleuth unearths a rare gem

FIRST THE good news. Radio 3's one and only musical current affairs programme, *Music Matters*, is to be revived. Its axing was a typically daft Birt-Bannister idea, obediently rubber-stamped by the former controller of Radio 3, Nicholas Kenyon. Its revivification has not yet been formally announced, but since I prized confirmation of the event from Kenyon's successor, Roger Wright, I am inclined to believe it.

As Wright observed, it would have been ludicrous for a music channel to have no programme on which musical issues could be discussed. The ill-fated *World Music* slot still looks a likely candidate to go, but Wright promises that world music will always be strongly present in the schedules, in unghettoised form. We'll be watching, Roger.

And now for the bad news. Unless some extraordinary alchemy takes place in the editing room, this Sunday's edition of *Music Matters* will be a real snoozer. I know this, because I was there in the audience at the Barbican where it was recorded. It wasn't necessarily a bad idea to convene music's top movers and shakers for a short, sharp think-in about this Government's policies, but somehow the thing never sparked.

Neither of the debate's two direct hits ruffled the emollient Alan Haworth, the late-reformed Tory who now represents the Department of Culture. He laughed off the plausible suggestion that Tony Blair is secretly glad that Covent Garden is now dark – it doesn't fit the Blairite image at all – and he insisted that the Arts Council's imminent devolution of power to the regions was a perfectly sensible development, rather than the cock-up it will shortly prove to be. He

SIGHT READINGS



MICHAEL CHURCH

said more than once, that it was "not for him to tell the Council what to do", as though the dear old arm's-length principle still existed. Does the Arts Council itself still exist? Not for very much longer.



On sale: Caruso caricature

AN AUTOGRAPHED letter from Claudio Monteverdi – what an 16th-century letter! No, unless you click in at 280,000 this morning you won't get a sniff of one of the only two Monteverdi letters free of museum captivity. The trade in musical manuscripts is booming, and today's auction at Sotheby's is as good an indication as any of

the way the wind is blowing.

There's an autographed Schumann song-cycle estimated at £120,000, and a stash of Diaghilev's letters from £30,000. There's a Haydn letter for £12,000, and one from the doomed and syphilitic Schubert starting at £20,000. The last of these sales saw a single page of Mozart go for £88,000, and a complete Brahms manuscript for £441,000. But small spenders can also play: today, there are missives from Liszt starting at a mere £400, and around £700 you can walk off with a Caruso self-caricature as a samurai, or a musical billet-doux from Puccini. You could spend a lot more than that on an Armani suit.

Last year, quite by accident, I stumbled into this game. Poking around in a junk shop on an island off the coast of Estonia, I found a cache of piano music that had been collected and bound by a St Petersburg enthusiast in the 1820s. It was a wonderful moment: opening the thick, hand-printed pages was like uncurling an ancient perfume. The whole lot didn't cost me much, and it later proved not to be worth a lot, either, but ever since that day I have been hooked.

So is Sotheby's book expert, Stephen Roe, a trained musicologist who has turned his Johann Christian Bach specialism to excellent account. One of today's prize catches – an autograph manuscript of a J.C. Bach aria – owes its presence entirely to Roe's acumen. "I and a colleague were looking through a huge collection of manuscripts, and this was in my pile. It had no name or identification, but I instantly recognised the handwriting, and realised it was a manuscript which had been lost since the end of the 18th century." He couldn't dream of buying

it himself – estimates start at £25,000 – but that's not the point; for him – it's the thrill of the chase.

And also the closeness that it brings with composers. Manuscript scores are far more important to Roe than mere letters: "With this aria, for example, you can tell very clearly how he wanted the music to sound, from the way he wrote it out. It's a real contact with the man." Roe is the musicologist's Hercule Poirot. He it was who first spotted Clara Schumann's calligraphy threaded through the manuscript of Robert Schumann's piano concerto, and he's also a noted sniffer-out of fakes. He helped to rumble the recent Haydn "find of the century" which conned the world's top experts and inspired – like the "Hitler Diaries" – an exultant editorial in *The Times*.

Fakes, he says, generally fall into one of two categories: those which are designed to deceive, and those which are merely the product of some great composer's copyist, rather than of the man himself. Bach, Stravinsky, and Mendelssohn all come into the latter category, with Mozart files and pères being equally hard to distinguish.

Spotting a fake, says Roe, is like looking through a window that has frusted over. "One corner starts to evaporate, and the whole thing becomes crystal clear." What next? His dream is to find the autographed manuscripts to Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto and his "Hammerklavier", and he lives in hope. "If a work by J.C. Bach, lost since the 18th century, can turn up in a south London warehouse just because I happen to wander in... well, anything can happen. And I want to be there if it does."

THE COMPACT COLLECTION

ROB COWAN ON THE WEEK'S CD RELEASES

ANY INFORMED assessment of the year's classical CDs will place piano music at its centre, with Philips's multi-disc "Great Pianists of the 20th Century" series as the inevitable highlight. Many releases have featured virtuosos whose reputations still stand intact, but two recall significant lesser-known talents who were cut off in their prime: the American William Kapell and the Australian Noel Mewton-Wood. Both were born in 1922 and both died in 1953. Kapell in an air-crash and Mewton-Wood by his own hand. Neither pianist has enjoyed much representation on CD, but in the case of Kapell, BMG has made ample amends with its nine-CD "William Kapell Edition".

Mewton-Wood's star has been rather slower to ascend, though Pearl recently made a start with a Weber sonata disc and now the French company Dante has re-issued flamboyant, occasionally idiosyncratic and frequently brilliant accounts of Chopin's two piano concertos. In the Second Concerto's dreamy Larghetto you encounter playing that stretches and indulges the musical line with audacious freedom. How has such charismatic playing languished in the vaults for so long? Perhaps we might now expect Mewton-Wood's equally striking accounts of the Tchaikovsky concertos.

Kapell's "Edition" chronicles a less wilful talent from auspicious youth to early maturity, and

with useful annotation from Alan Evans and Annette Morreau. Dextero readings of Prokofiev Three and the Khachaturian sometimes defy belief, but the musical core of Kapell's playing lies in his Chopin, including a heart-rendering sequence of 30-odd mazurkas. There are concertos by Beethoven and Rachmaninov, notable collaborations with Heifetz and Primrose, a previously unissued live concert that includes Copland's Piano Sonata, and an interview. Rubinstein and Horowitz are obvious influences, but the farther you venture towards that fateful day in 1953, the more you realise that Kapell was discovering his own interpretative paths. Had he lived, he would likely have vied with

his younger peers Julius Katchen and Leon Fleisher.

In the case of Russian-born Shura Cherkassky, comparisons are hardly relevant. Even in his eighties, Cherkassky was a provocative one-off, a perennial youngster. His mercurial playing never lost its sparkle, though collectors have long prized his fiercely individualistic mono set of Chopin Studies. Happily, these and some later Chopin recordings are about to re-appear as part of Philips's "Great Pianists" series. Unmissable, I'd say.

Chopin/Mewton-Wood: Dante HPC105 (full price) **William Kapell Editions:** BMG 09026-63442-2 19 discs, mid price) **Chopin/Cherkassky:** Philips 456 742-2 (12 discs, mid price)

Too many notes, Mr Gold

ON THE AIR
ADRIAN JACK

ONE OF the dominant images in Shkhar Kapur's recent feature film *Elizabeth* was the vast nave of Durham Cathedral – a puzzling choice of location, for all its splendour. Elizabeth never went further north than Stafford while she was queen, though that's merely an academic quibble. But Durham Cathedral suggested such an unlikely setting for the court that it was surreal. Elizabeth's main residence was the Palace of Whitehall, first inhabited by her parents, Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, in 1533.

In Radio 3's *Spirit of the Age* on Sunday afternoon, the historians Daniel Snowman and David Starkey tried to create an idea of what the vast Whitehall complex was like, and how it grew throughout the reigns of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs. By the time it burst

Charles I esteemed William Lawes above all other composers. There was no mention of any of the great Tudor composers, or even of Purcell, though we did hear two bits of his music written for Queen Mary's funeral.

Purcell might, I suppose, have featured occasionally in Becky Sharp's repertoire of seductive songs, though it stretched the imagination when in the fifth episode of BBC1's *Vanity Fair*, Natasha Little had a group of ladies nonplussed with an acridulation, small-spirited rendition of Dido's lament, "When I am laid in earth". Perhaps this small surprise was intended as an ambiguous indicator of her impending fate, to yield to Lord Steyne and her own ruin. Or is that to overestimate the director, Marc Munden? After

all, he may have an eye for grotesque caricature, but he has hardly ventured into the ironic world of Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's films of Wagner, which represent mythical archetypes as wobbly puppets.

Earlier in the same episode, the jazzy vulgarity of Becky's knowing little number at the fortissimo was as embarrassing as it was unlikely. Yet Murray Gold's sardonic music, with its recurring leitmotif of three sinister chords, makes an effective contribution to the chill of this morality tale without attempting period pastiche. There's too much music, though as Becky sobbed her stony heart out at the end of last Sunday's episode, there was a devastating silence, more eloquent than any music.

NEW FILMS

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)
Director: George Miller
Starring: Megaw Sabanski, James Cromwell, (U) Daily

The follow-up to 1995's *Babe* tosses the hapless "sheep-pig" into the midst of the city where he becomes the unlikely saviour of a bunch of waifs. Knockabout comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleak animalistic fairytale that verges on the sadistic. Adults should go to a cinema on Miller's skewed, carnival ambience. What kids will make of it is anyone's guess.
West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

DANCING AT LUGHNASSA (PG)
Director: Pat O'Connor
Starring: Meryl Streep, Michael Gambon, Kathy Burke
Less a dance, more of a trudge, O'Connor's Ireland-set saga pinpoints the ebb and flow of an eccentric Catholic family in deepest Donegal. What gives it backbone is Meryl Streep's regal performance as the brood's eldest sister, plus the ever-watchable Michael Gambon as the homecoming brother. But it's not enough, and its static, stage-play origins are all too readily apparent.
West End: Curzon Mayfair, Screen on the Hill

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U)
Director: Frank Capra
Starring: James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore
Capra's festive bauble is a lot darker and more complex than it is generally given credit for being, with James Stewart's labouring everyman shown how dreary his hometown would have been had he never been born, before returning merrily to his Job-like existence. Its syrupy sentimentality contains a thick vein of bile, and at the day's end this is the making of the film, turning it into a bittersweet salute to the little man who makes a big difference.
West End: Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Phoenix Cinema, Ritzy Cinema

ON CONNAIL LA CHANSON (PG)
Director: Alain Resnais
Starring: Pierre Arditi, Sabine Azema
Love him or loathe him, *Last Year at Marienbad* auteur Resnais is a queer fish. Four years after the

Continental breakfast, he made of Alan Ayckbourn's *Smoking/No Smoking* comes this rattling merry-go-round of romantic intrigue, "inspired by the work of Dennis Potter", and featuring a lot of Potter-esque lip-synching to popular French show tunes. West End: Chelsea Cinema, Renoir

RUSH HOUR (15)
Director: Brett Ratner
Starring: Jackie Chan, Chris Tucker, Tom Wilkinson
Rush Hour marries the Hong Kong action icon Jackie Chan with an LA backdrop, a jobbing Hollywood director (Money Talks' Ratner) and a wisecracking black comic in Chris Tucker's huckstering LAPD man. Its caffeinated plotline sends Easterner and Westerner on the trail of a Chinese crime syndicate and oscillates wildly between Tucker's verbal dexterity and Chan's adrenalised physicality. It's a bit-and-miss affair.
West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

TWILIGHT (15)
Director: Robert Benton
Starring: Paul Newman, Susan Sarandon, Gene Hackman
Twilight reunites Newman with his Nobody's Fool collaborator Benton for a zimmer-framed film noir which has the former's ageing gumshoe moving in with movie-star buddy Hackman and uncovering a skeleton in the family closet. While this is predictable stuff, muscular acting from a practised cove moves it along nicely.
West End: Plaza

YEAR OF THE HORSE (15)
Director: Jim Jarmusch
Starring: Neil Young and Crazy Horse
Jarmusch's documentary on Neil Young and Crazy Horse is respectful but never reverential, swinging between bracing live footage, robust interviews and disconcerting dips back into the archive. As a man, though, Young remains oddly oblique and unknowable, loitering in the background for most of the off-stage segments. He's content to let his music do the talking.
West End: ABC Piccadilly, Renoir

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

Insomnia (15)
Remarkable debut by Erik Skjoldbjærg begins with a policeman (Stellan Skarsgård) investigating a sex killing in Norway, but becomes a haunting study in guilt, duplicity and sleeplessness.



Out of Sight (15)
Director Steven Soderbergh's tale of love on opposite sides of the law knocks spots off every previous Elmore Leonard adaptation, and boasts in George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez the swooniest romantic pairing of the cinema year.

Antz (PG)
Computer-animated comedy voiced by a stellar cast stars Woody Allen (above) as a worker ant who becomes an opponent of the colony's totalitarian regime. Good fun, and Allen's best work in a while.

My Name is Joe (15)
All that one would expect from a Ken Loach film - humour, indignation, emotional sympathy - driven by Peter Mullan's scary, intense performance as a recovering alcoholic.

The Philadelphia Story (U; Curzon Soho, NFT)
As civilised and graceful as any romantic comedy ever made, it also brought together the most loveable of Hollywood trios - Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant and James Stewart.

ANTHONY QUINN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

The Invention of Love
Theatre Royal, Haymarket
A witty, heart-breaking fantasia by Tom Stoppard on the twin passions of A.E. Housman: scholarship and an unavailable heterosexual friend.

Little Malcolm and His Struggle Against the Eunuchs
Hampstead Theatre
Denis Lawson's superbly amusing cast are in no way eclipsed by screen-heartthrob Ewan McGregor, who brings complexity to the central role.

Kafka's Dick
Piccadilly Theatre
Spitting Kafka to suburban England, this hilarious romp by Alan Bennett survives some peculiar casting in Peter Hall's revival.

The Seagull
West Yorkshire Playhouse
The new company of Jude Kelly, headed by Ian McKellen and Clare Higgins (right), kicks off with this Chekhov classic in a tempting season that will include *The Tempest*.



PAUL TAYLOR

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Louise Bourgeois
Serpentine Gallery
Autobiographical installations from the surrealist sculptress feature a giant mother/spider presiding over images of spinning and weaving, restoration and decay. To 10 Jan



Turner Prize Tate Gallery
Hugely popular competitive bash in which four artists show their wares. Works by this year's winner, Chris Ofili, are displayed alongside those of runners-up Tacita Dean, Cathy de Monchaux (above) and Sam Taylor-Wood. To 10 Jan

Bridget Riley
Abbott Hall, Kendal
A retrospective on Riley's career from her early Sixties Op Art, moving from rippling monochromes to colour, stripes and diagonals. To 31 Jan

Edward Burne-Jones
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
The people's Pre-Raphaelite century exhibition gathers together many favourites such as *King Cophetua* and *The Beggar Maid*. To 17 Jan

Helen Chadwick
Ferens Gallery, Hull
The first overview since this influential UK artist's death mid-career in 1996. Lush light-boxes of fruit, flowers and fluids, and the last series, *Unnatural Selection*, showcasing IVF embryos. To 17 Jan

TOM LUBBOCK

GENERAL RELEASE

ANTZ (PG)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

FEAR (18)
Monotonous arcade-game thriller about a New York vampire-killer tackling a power-crazed new bloodsucker. West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End

DEAD MAN'S CURVE (15)
The students at writer-director Dan Rosen's American college are trying to butcher each other, led into temptation by an obscure regulation that awards straight A-grades to the r/2n-mates of suicides. Though not as nasty as the *Scream* films, this delivers a respectable quota of shocks. West End: Metro, Virgin Trocadero

ELIZABETH (15)
Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of a female struggling to gain purchase in a male world. Kapur largely neglects the chance for fun in a story of independence triumphing over cruelty. West End: Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Virgin Fulham Road

THE EXORCIST (25TH ANNIVERSARY RE-RELEASE) (18)
The Exorcist is a creature conditioned by rumour and hearsay, its legend swelling in the 25 years since its release. But William Friedkin's horror is still terrifying. West End: Clapham Picture House, Ritzy Cinema, Warner Village West End

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (18)
Terry Gilliam's adaptation tilts at Ralph Steadman cartoonery for its tale of a drug-fuelled journalistic assignment. The film soon descends into a carnival of narcotic lunacy, and the one stand-out is Johnny Depp who brings Hunter S Thompson into bald-headed, pigeon-toed life. West End: ABC Baker Street, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Camden Town, Virgin Haymarket

IF ONLY (15)
Mix Twelve Monkeys with *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and you'd get Maria Ripoll's dreadful Anglo-Spanish comedy about a dumped boyfriend who is transported back in time by mysterious Spanish dustmen. West End: Odeon Mezzanine

LEFT LUGGAGE (PG)
Krabbe's first stab as a director results in an uncertain soap opera, focusing on the ebbs and flows within a *Basic* family in 1970s Holland. Fiftal as drama, the film comes to life as a showcase for its high-profile performers and newcomer Laura Fraser. West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Curzon Minima, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Phoenix Cinema, Screen on Baker Street

LOCK, STOCK & TWO SMOKING BARRELS (18)
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels' defining characteristic is its resilient morality. The picture is peopled by thugs, both amateur and professional. Young Eddy, who comes unstuck in a high-stakes card-game, falls into the former category, but Hatchet Harry, to whom he owes £500,000, is an old-school pro. West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Warner Village West End

LES MISERABLES (12)
Bille August turns Victor Hugo's novel into an enormous film and it's as traditional as literary

adaptations come these days. It's earnest, differential and almost humourless. West End: Odeon West End

MULAN (U)
In Disney's animated feature, a girl disguises herself as a soldier to spare her father from combat. This has got it all. A pro-active heroine; a strong father/daughter relationship; honour and nobility; and, of course, cross-dressing. It's also visually innovative. West End: Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

MY NAME IS JOE (15)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Green, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket

THE NEGOTIATOR (15)
Samuel L. Jackson and Kevin Spacey go head to head in Gray's thrilling drama. The script has a predilection for junk-headed swearing that sounds uneasy in the mouths of such articulate, rhetorical performers. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Hammersmith Virgin, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Marble Arch, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

OUT OF SIGHT (15)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above
West End: Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Gate Notting Hill, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY (U)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above
West End: Curzon Soho

RONIN (15)
A tired espionage thriller about a gang of mercenaries in pursuit of a mysterious suitcase. As the leader of the gang, Robert De Niro does his blank-faced, gristle-chewing act. As dull as ditch-water. West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

ROUNDERS (15)
John Dahl's poker-club thriller is not a grand comeback for the director of *The Last Seduction* but it's certainly an improvement on the eminently forgettable *Unforgettable*. West End: Virgin Chelsea, Warner Village West End

SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS (15)
Tamara Jenkins's fictionalised account of her own teenage years in the outskirts of Beverly Hills lacks the wit of *The Ice Storm* and *Boogie Nights*. But her impeccable sense of comic timing is enhanced by a superb central performer in Alan Arkin. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Ritzy Cinema

VICTORY (15)
A Conrad adaptation which takes us to a sleazy hotel in the South Seas, and provides some safe, literary acting from Simon Callow and friends. West End: ABC Panton Street, Clapham Picture House

THE WISDOM OF CROCODILES (15)
Jude Law plays a vampire who wines and dines his victims. An attempt to give an adult twist to a genre that's principally an adolescent enthusiasm. West End: ABC Panton Street, ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET
(0870 9020418) @ Baker Street
Babe: Pig In The City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm
Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.15pm

ABC PANTON STREET
(0870 9020404) @ Piccadilly
Circus The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
A Perfect Murder 2.40pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm
Victory 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6.05pm, 8.35pm
The Wisdom of Crocodiles 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC PICCADILLY
(0171-287 4322 (from 1pm)) @ Piccadilly
Circus Hamam: The Turkish Bath 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm
Year of the Horse 1.20pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE
(0870 9020402) @ Leicester Square/Piccadilly
Circus Angel Sharks 1.30pm, 3.25pm, 5.20pm, 7.15pm, 9.10pm
The Governors 1.45pm, 4.05pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm
Left Luggage 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm
La Vie Revee Des Anges 1.25pm, 3.45pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0870 9020414) @ Tottenham Court Road
Antz 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm
Babe: Pig In The City 1.35pm, 4pm, 7.05pm, 9.30pm
My Name Is Joe 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
The Negotiator 3.40pm, 8.50pm

BARBICAN SCREEN
(0171-638 8891) @ Barbican
Babe: Pig In The City 6pm, 8.15pm
Out of Sight 6pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA
(0171-351 3742) @ Soane Square
On Central Line to Chancery 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE
(0171-498 9323) @ Clapham Common
Babe: Pig In The City 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.30pm
The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Release) 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm
The Wisdom of Crocodiles 7pm

CURZON MAYFAIR
(0171-369 1720) @ Green Park
Dancing At Lughnassa 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

CURZON SOHO
(0171-734 2255 (12pm-6pm)) @ Leicester Square/Tottenham Court Road
The Eel 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm
The Fountainhead 2.45pm, 7.15pm
Henry Fool 3.20pm, 9pm
A Wonderful Life 12.45pm, 6.30pm
The Philadelphia Story 12.30pm, 5pm, 9.30pm

ELEPHANT & CASTLE CORONET
(0171-703 4968) @ Elephant & Castle
Antz 3.45pm, 5.40pm
Babe: Pig In The City 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm
Out of Sight 8.35pm
Rush Hour 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE
(0950-888990) @ Leicester Square
Babe: Pig In The City 1.11pm, 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm, 11.15pm
Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9pm, 11.40pm
Out of Sight 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.35pm, 11.20pm

GATE NOTTING HILL
(0171-727 4043) @ Notting Hill Gate
It's A Wonderful Life 1.40pm, Out of Sight 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.05pm, 11.35pm

HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN
(0870-9070718) @ Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith
Antz 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.40pm
Babe: Pig In The City 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm
The Negotiator 8.40pm
Out of Sight 12.50pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm
Rush Hour 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9pm

ICA CINEMA
(0171-590 3547) @ Charing Cross
Antz 1.15pm, 3.40pm
Rush Hour 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm
Saving Private Ryan 8.30pm, 7.15pm
The Truman Show 6pm, 8.30pm
Twilight 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.35pm

METRO
(0171-734 1506) @ Piccadilly
Circus/Leicester Square Buffalo 66 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm
Dead Man's Curve 6pm
German Film Festival phone for details
Underground 10.45pm

CURZON MINIMA
(0171-369 1723) @ Hyde Park Corner
Left Luggage 2.50pm, 6.50pm
La Vie Revee Des Anges 4.40pm, 8.40pm

NOTTING HILL CORONET
(0171-727 6705) @ Notting Hill Gate
The Negotiator 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN
(08705 050007) @ Camden Town
Antz 12.55pm
Babe: Pig In The City 12.15pm, 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm
Blade 11.25pm
Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas 1.30pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm, 9.10pm
The Negotiator 12.25pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 8.35pm, 11.20pm
Out of Sight 12.10pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.35pm, 11.15pm
Ronin 3.15pm, 5pm, 8.45pm
Rush Hour 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 9pm, 11.30pm

ODEON HAYMARKET
(08705 050007) @ Piccadilly
Circus Elizabeth 2.15pm, 5pm, 7.45pm

ODEON KENSINGTON
(08705 050007) @ High Street
Kensington Antz 12.50pm, 2.50pm, 4.50pm
Babe: Pig In The City 12.15pm, 2.40pm, 5.05pm, 7.30pm, 9.55pm, 12.15pm, 2.30pm, 4.55pm, 6.55pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12.25pm
Out of Sight 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm, 12.20pm
Ronin 12.30pm, 3.25pm, 6.20pm, 9.15pm, 12.10am
Rush Hour 1.50pm, 4.25pm, 7pm, 9.35pm, 12.10am
Snake Eyes 1.45pm, 4.20pm, 9.45pm, 12.15am

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE
(08705 050007) @ Leicester Square
Ronin 12.35pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm, 11.20pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH
(08705 050007) @ Marble Arch
Babe: Pig In The City 11.55am, 2.20pm, 4.45pm, 7.10pm, 9.35pm
Blade 12.10pm
The Negotiator 11.45am, 2.50pm, 5.55pm, 9pm, 12.05am
Out of Sight 12.20pm, 3.15pm, 6.05pm, 8.55pm, 11.55pm
Ronin 12.35pm, 3.25pm, 6.20pm, 9.05pm, 12.05am
Rush Hour 11.50am, 2.15pm, 4.40pm, 7.05pm, 9.30pm, 11.55pm

ODEON MEZZANINE
(08705 050007) @ Leicester Square
Antz 12.35pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
If Only 1.05pm, 3.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.35pm
Snake Eyes 2pm, 4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.35pm
There's Something About Mary 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm
The Wedding Singer 2.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.35pm, 8.45pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE
(08705 050007) @ Swiss Cottage
Antz 12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm
Babe: Pig In The City 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Elizabeth 12.10pm, 5.50pm
Left Luggage 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm
Out of Sight 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Ronin 3pm, 8.30pm
Rush Hour 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm

ODEON WEST END
(08705 050007) @ Leicester Square
Les Misérables 2pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm
Ronin 12.35pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm
Snake Eyes 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

PEPSI IMAX CINEMA
(494 4153) @ Piccadilly
Across The Sea of Time - A New York Adventure (3-D) 12.45pm, 5.05pm
Everest 3pm, 7.25pm, 9.30pm
T-Rex: Back To The Cretaceous (3-D) 11.40am, 1.55pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.25pm, 10.30pm

PHOENIX CINEMA
(0181-444 6789) @ East Finchley
It's A Wonderful Life 1.55pm (+ Short) Left Luggage 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9pm

PLAZA
(0950-888990) @ Piccadilly Circus
Antz 1.15pm, 3.40pm
Rush Hour 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm
Saving Private Ryan 8.30pm, 7.15pm
The Truman Show 6pm, 8.30pm
Twilight 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.35pm

RENOIR
(0171-837 8402) @ Russell Square
On Connail La Chanson 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm
The Knowledge of Healing 4.05pm
Year of the Horse 1.50pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm

RIO CINEMA
(0171-254 6677) @ Dalston
Kingsland The 6th London Turkish Film Festival Phone for details
Love Under Siege 6pm
Mira Ma Man Troppo 1.45pm
Mixed Pizza 8.30pm
The Town 4pm

RITZY CINEMA
(0171-733 2229) @ BR @ Brixton
Antz 7.35pm
Blade 8.50pm, 11.30pm
City of Lost Children 1.35pm
The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Release) 11.40pm
It's A Wonderful Life 2.10pm, 4.50pm
My Name Is Joe 3.45pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm
Short: The Man Who Held His Breath Out of Sight 1.10pm, 3.55pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm, 11.55pm
(+ Short: Rumsch) Rush Hour 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm, 11.50pm
Slums of Beverly Hills 9.30pm
The Truman Show 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 11.35pm
Whitlall & 1.1.35pm

SCREEN ON BAKER STREET
(0171-935 2772) @ Baker Street
Left Luggage 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9pm
Out of Sight 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

SCREEN ON THE GREEN
(0171-226 3520) @ Angel Buffalo
66 11.15pm
My Name Is Joe 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm

SCREEN ON THE HILL
(0171-435 3366) @ Belsize Park
Dancing At Lughnassa 2.45pm, 4.50pm, 6.55pm, 9.05pm

UCI WHITELEYS
(0950-888990) @ Queensway
Antz 2.50pm, 4.50pm
Babe: Pig In The City 4pm, 6.10pm, 7.20pm, 9.50pm
Blade 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm
The Negotiator 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm, 11.50pm
Ronin 3.10pm, 6.45pm, 9.30pm
Rush Hour 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.20pm

VIRGIN CHLOE
(0870-9070710) @ Soane Square/South Kensington
Antz 12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm
My Name Is Joe 8.30pm
Out of Sight 12.30pm, 3pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm
Rounders 12.50pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 9pm
Rush Hour 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.15pm

VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD
(0870-9070711) @ South Kensington
Babe: Pig In The City 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm
Elizabeth 2pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm
The Negotiator 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm
Perfect Murder 2.30pm, 5.50pm, 8.40pm
Ronin 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
There's Something About Mary 2.15pm, 6pm, 8.50pm

VIRGIN HAYMARKET
(0870-9070712) @ Piccadilly Circus
Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.35pm
My Name Is Joe 12.55pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm
There's Something About Mary 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm

VIRGIN TROCADERO
(0870-9070716) @ Piccadilly Circus
Antz 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm
Babe: Pig In The City 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.45pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
Blade 12.10pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.40pm, 11.35pm
Dead Man's Curve 12.10am
Mean Guns 9pm, 11

FRIDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.6-98.8MHz FM)
6.00 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo.
12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00
Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris
Moyle. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00
Pete Tong's Essential Selection.
9.00 Judge Jules. 11.00 West-
wood - Radio 1 Rap Show. 2.00
Fabio and Grooverider. 4.00 -
7.00 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2
(88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake
Up to Wogan. 9.30 Ken Bruce.
12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed
Stewart. 5.05 Des Lynam. 7.00
Hubert Gregg. 7.30 Friday Night
Is Music Night: Live from the
Guilhall, Preston. Ken Bruce in-
troduces the BBC Concert Or-
chestra, conducted by Roderick
Dunk, with guest artists Claire
Moore, Glyn Kerslake and the
Grimethorpe Colliery RJB Band. At
8.15, during the interval, Brian Kay
introduces an item by percussionist
Evelyn Glennie. 9.15 Wuthering
Heights. 9.30 Listen to the Band.
10.00 David Jacobs. 10.30
Sheridan Morley. 12.00 Nicky
Horne. 4.00 - 6.00 Lata Sharma.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.
11.00 Sound Stories.
12.00 Composer of the Week:
Mozart.
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Con-
cert.
2.00 The BBC Orchestras.
4.00 Music Restored.
4.45 Music Machine.
5.00 In Tune.
7.30 Performance on 3. Live from
St David's Hall, Cardiff. Conductor
Tadaaki Otaka, Howard Shelley
(piano), BBC National Chorus of
Wales, William Mathias: Ave rex.
Puccini: Manon Lescaut (Intermezzo
to Act 3). Rachmaninov: Rhapso-
dy on a Theme of Paganini.
8.15 The House of Fear. The third
of four interval programmes of
readings from the surrealist works
of Leonora Carrington. 1. 'Royal
Symphony'. Reader: Kate Beckin-
sale. 2. 'The Seventh Horse'.
Reader: Eleanor Bron.
8.35 Concert, part 2.

PICK OF THE DAY

TWO STORIES about the
prejudices that have shaped
British society. Waiting for the
Earth to Move (9pm R4) is a
drama about Nick Leeson (right),
the rogue trader who brought
down Barings Bank. Andrew
Lincoln, Egg in This Life, plays
Leeson, while Richard Briers
plays an emblematic old banker,
heading off for evenings in the
bar at Covent Garden while his

business is quietly going down
the toilet. John Fletcher inclines
to stereotype, but it's pacy and
well-explained.
Looking Back to Arthur
(11.30pm R4) examines the case
of Arthur Wharton, Britain's
first black footballer: why his
career vanished and, even
more interestingly, why his
name is now being revived.
ROBERT HANKS



11.00 NEWS: Strictly
Conventional.
11.30 Girls: (R)
12.00 NEWS: You and Yours.
12.57 Weather.
1.00 The World at One.
1.30 Screen Test.
2.00 NEWS: The Archers.
2.15 Afternoon Play: A Mermaid
at Zenon.
3.00 NEWS: Making History.
3.30 Songlines.
3.45 Feedback.
4.00 NEWS: How the Stories
Took Over.
4.30 The Message.
5.00 PM.
5.57 Weather.
6.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.30 True Lies.
7.00 NEWS: The Archers.
7.15 Front Row: Francine Stock
chairs the night's arts programme.
7.45 Still Waters: Part 20 by Ann
Marie Di Mambro and Cally
Phillips. Kate's birthday looms and
Charlie has a proposal. Mean-
while, an encounter with the mys-
terious Veska has a profound
effect on Douglas, and Frankie
Callaghan has big plans for Joana.
With Ann Scott-Jones, Emma
Currie and Liam Brennan. Director
David Jackson Young.
8.00 NEWS: Any Questions?
Jonathan Dimbleby is joined in
Southampton by panelists including
Val Evans of the Women's National
Congress, Derek Fatchett MP and
Dave Pox of ASLEF.
8.45 Letter from America: Alistair
Cooke with another slice of Ameri-
cana.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(693.900kHz MW)
6.00 Breakfast.
9.00 Nicky Campbell.
12.00 The Midday News.
1.00 Ruscoe and Co.
4.00 Drive.
7.00 News Extra.
7.30 Alan Green's Sportsnight.
Alan Green and his guests look
back over the week and preview
the weekend's sporting action.
10.00 Late Night Live. Insight and
comment on the day's big issues
with Brian Hayes. Including Pa-
perback. 10.30 Sport. 11.00 News.
11.15 The Financial World Tonight.
5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Nick Bailey. 8.00 Henry Kelly.
12.00 Requests. 2.00 Concerto.
3.00 Jamie Cullum. 6.30 Newsnight.
7.00 Classics at Seven. 9.00
Evening Concert: Brahms: Academi-
c Festival Overture. Berlin PO/Nikolaus
Harnoncourt. Brahms:
Schicksalslied, Op 54. Ernst Senft
Chorus, Berlin PO/Claudio Abbado.
Orff: Carmina Burana. Sumi Jo (so-
prano), RPO/Zubin Mehta. Sarasate:
Zigeunerweisen, Op 20. Joshua Bell
(violin), RPO/Andrew Lloyd. 11.00
Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 -
6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO
(125.197-126.0kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Classic
Countdown with Russ Williams.
1.00 Nick Abbott. 4.00 Harriet
Scott. 7.00 Wheels of Steel.
11.00 Janey Lee Grace. 2.00 -
6.00 Richard West.

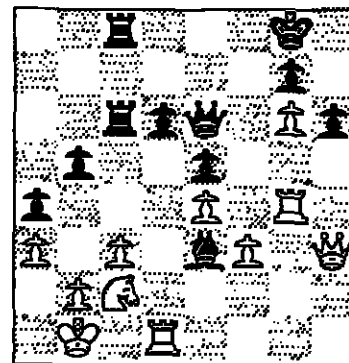
WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(198kHz LW)
1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 To Be Con-
tinued. 1.45 Poems by Post.
2.00 Newsday. 2.30 People and
Politics. 3.00 World News. 3.05
World Business Report. 3.15
Sports Roundup. 3.30 Science in
Action. 4.00 Newsdesk. 4.30
Weekend. 5.00 Newsday. 5.30
Outlook. 5.55 - 6.00 Spotlight.

TALK RADIO
6.00 Bill Overton and Clare Cat-
ford. 9.00 Scott Chisholm. 12.00
Lorraine Kelly. 2.00 Anna Ras-
bourn. 4.00 Peter Deasy. 5.00
The Sports Zone. 9.00 Mike
Allen. 2.00 - 6.00 Mike Dickinson.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



JUST A week after (what you could
term) the "World Cadet Champ-
ionships" in Oropesa in Spain the
junior troops were in action again
in the World Junior Championships
themselves - that is, under 20 - in
Calicut in the south west of India in
13-round tournaments which ended
on Monday.
Although both the boys' and the
girls' tournaments were extremely
strong, first place in each was de-
termined with a round to spare. The
boys' was won by Dermen Sad-
vakasov from Kazakhstan, with a
sensational 11/13. He was followed
by Zhong Zhang from Peking on 10.5
and Hristos Banikas (Greece) and
Dao Thien Hai (Vietnam) on 10.
Another Vietnamese player,
Hoang Thanh Trang, took gold in the
girls' event with an excellent 11/13.
She was followed by Iweta Rad-
ziewicz (Poland) on 10.5 and 14-year-
old Irina Krush, the runaway winner
of the recent US Women's Cham-
pionship, on 10.

Our two representatives in the
boys' event, Miroslav Houska and
Simon Williams, both scored 6.5/13.
The world girls' under-18 champion
Ruth Sheldon could hardly have
been expected to perform so well
again immediately after her success
in Oropesa; and after losing in the
last round to the silver medalist
Radziewicz, she ended up on just 7.
Jovanka Houska got 6.
The new World Junior Champion
is a fine technician with a penchant
for queen endings, of which he won
at least two in Calicut. But he can
also transmute positional pluses
into violent attacking action, as in
today's game.

If 9 Qd2 is more or less equalised,
hence the rather odd 9 Qe2 when if
9... d5? 10 exd5 Nxd5 11 0-0-0 the pin
is very nasty. 12 g3 prepared f4

though he changed his mind after
Black castled.
Possibly Black could safely win a
piece starting 24... h3xg6 25 h3xg6
axb3 26 cxb3 but Sadvakasov's
choice was much safer, and already
good for him. After the blunder 32
Nc2? leading to the diagram, Black
smashed through. If 33 bxc3 Qb3+
34 Ka1 Qxc3+ 35 Kb1 Qxc2+ etc.

White: Zhong Zhong
Black: Dermen Sadvakasov
Calicut 1998 - round 7
Sicilian Najdorf

1 e4 c5	21 Kb1 a5
2 Nf3 d6	22 Qg2 Kf8
3 d4 cxd4	23 b5 a4
4 Nxd4 Nf6	24 g5 fxg6
5 Nc3 a6	25 h3xg6 h6
6 Be3 e5	26 Na1 Bg5
7 Nb3 Be6	27 Nc3 Ne3
8 f3 Nc6	28 Nxe3 Bxe3
9 Qe2 Na5	29 Qh3 Bxg4
10 0-0-0 Nc4	30 Rxd4 Kg8
11 Bg5 Be7	31 c3 Qe6
12 g3 Re8	32 Nc2? (see diagram) Rxc2!
13 h4 0-0	33 Nxe3 Rxe3
14 g4 b5	34 Rg3 Qe4
15 Bxf6 Bxf6	35 Rgg1 Rxa3
16 g5 Be7	36 b3x3 Qc2+
17 Bh3 Qd7	37 Ka1 Qc3+
18 Bg4 Re6	38 Ka2 Qb3+
19 Nd5 Rf6	39 Ka1 Rxc2 0-1
20 Rhg1 Bb8	

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

TO COMBINE constructiveness
with obstruction when you have a
part score is always difficult. There
are many factors to be considered
and only some principles are firmly
established. Usually, in an un-
opposed auction an advance be-
yond what is necessary for game is
considered a mild slam try, but
sometimes only bidding enough for
game may allow the opponents in
on the act.

Another common practice (with
a part score of 80 or more) is that
an opening bid of 1 No-trumps may
be based on anything between 11
and 19 points, irrespective of what
no-trump range has been agreed.
This all brings me to this deal -
what would be your choice of open-
ing bid with the South hand?
One Heart allows East-West too much
scope; Two Hearts, although not, as
usual, forcing for one round, will be
passed by North (who knows that
his partner could not open Two
Clubs) and again will let them in,
and a heavy 1 No-trumps gives
both opponents a chance.

I like the solution my partner

Love all: North-South

601 dealer South

North
♠ J 3
♥ J 8 7 6 4
♦ J 10 3
♣ A J 5

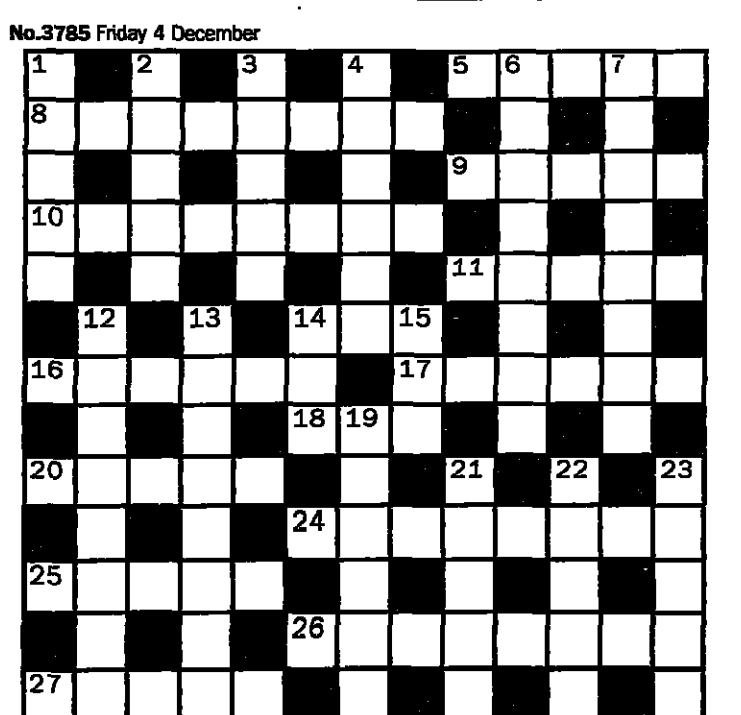
West
♠ Q 10 4
♥ 5 2
♦ A Q 8 7 6 2
♣ 10 8

East
♠ K 9 8 7 5 2
♥ none
♦ 9 4
♣ K 9 6 4 3

South
♠ A 6
♥ A K Q 10 9 3
♦ K 5
♣ Q 7 2

found - he opened 2 No-trumps!
Rather neat, if I had been strong,
he had enough playing tricks to co-
operate, and it effectively discour-
aged any enterprise from the
opponents. There were nine tricks
after a diamond lead and - wait for
it! - we'd have had no defence
against an adverse spade game.

CONCISE CROSSWORD



ACROSS
5 Plunder (5)
8 Titled lady (8)
9 Meat products (5)
10 Tincture of opium (8)
11 Purloin (5)
14 Body of water (3)
16 Palm used in weaving (6)
17 Stabbing weapon (6)
18 Father (3)
20 Modern means of communi-
cation (1-4)
24 Uphold (8)
25 Lukewarm (5)
26 Ponder (8)
27 Religious song (5)

DOWN
1 Propel using two oars (5)
2 Wait in line (5)
3 Drinking tube (5)
4 Put on (6)
6 Not seen by audience (8)
7 Bedside refreshment facility
(3-5)
12 Innocuous (8)
13 Sanctioned by authority (8)
14 Unhappy (3)
15 Tot up (3)
19 Counting-frame (6)
21 Shell-bearing gastropod (5)
22 Canoe which goes up and
down? (5)
23 Cynical expression (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Persian, 5 Alley (Personality), 8 Tonic, 9 Chances, 10 Landscape, 12 Aim, 13
Estuary, 14 Shell, 17 Pea, 18 Go-between, 20 Egghead, 21 Haste, 23 Start, 24 Mumble.
DOWN: 1 Fatal, 2 Ram, 3 Ladder, 4 Nestor, 5 Awe, 6 Lorraine, 7 Yashmak, 11 Nostal-
gia, 13 Express, 15 Hatred, 16 Indem, 18 Great, 19 Nice, 22 Sob.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

FILM-MAKERS have used snakes
to memorable effect in films
such as *Live and Let Die* and
Raiders of the Lost Ark. Tonight's
serpentine double-bill slithers in
with *Anaconda* (9pm Sky
MovieMax). In this entertaining
horror, a documentary crew on the
Amazon do battle with a killer
snake. It stars Ice Cube, Eric
Stoltz, Jon Voight and - thanks to
her sizzling performance opposite
George Clooney in *Out of Sight* -
Hollywood's current hottest

property, Jennifer Lopez (right).
This is followed by *Rattled*
(10.30pm), in which hundreds of
rattlesnakes invade a small town
inhabited by William Katt, an
architect with reptile phobia.
Lyndon B Johnson, the 36th
US President, was a man of
contradictory qualities. Profiled in
tonight's Biography (9pm
History Channel), he worked
for both civil-rights reform and
involvement in the Vietnam War.
JAMES RAMPTON



SKY PREMIER
6.00 The Incredible Journey (1983) (34015)
6.00 Lies He Told (1986) (55810), 10.00
Stepping Out (1991) (6568), 12.00 The In-
credible Journey (1983) (45433), 2.00 Lies
He Told (1986) (55810), 4.00 Stepping Out
(1991) (6568), 6.00 Green Card (1991)
(56817), 8.00 Roadies (1995) (50859), 10.00
Jerry Maguire (1996) (5331568), 12.30
Stealing Beauty (1996) (522255), 2.00
Roommates (1995) (48705), 4.50 - 6.00
Strictly Business (1998) (539232).

SKY MOVIEMAX
6.00 Goddess of Love (1988) (98839),
7.30 The Last Best Year (1990) (7658094),
9.45 The End of the Golden Week (1991)
(421947), 11.00 Earth Minus Zero (1996)
(48523), 1.00 Goddess of Love (1988)
(98839), 3.00 The Last Best Year (1990)
(7658094), 5.00 End of the Golden Week
(1991) (421947), 7.00 Preview (9025), 7.30
Top Ten (1993), 8.00 Femmes Fatales
(2549), 8.30 Movie Magic (1984), 9.00
Anaconda (1997) (44984), See Pick of the
Day, 10.30 Rattled (1996) (52257), See
Pick of the Day, 12.00 Tremors (1990)
(40840), 1.30 Movie Magic (1984) (44984),
2.00 Mind Breakers (1998) (488105), 3.40
- 5.00 The Fly II (1989) (480405).

SKY CINEMA
4.00 White Tower (1950) (7965655), 6.00
Call Northside 777 (1948) (371617), 8.00
Days of Wine and Roses (1963) (3876162),
10.00 The Stars Look Down (1939)
(421607), 11.55 Directors (1982146), 12.55
None Shall Escape (1944) (3345018), 2.25
Two for the Road (1967) (535233), 4.30 -
5.50 The Lineup (1959) (5350940).

FILMFOUR
6.00 Short Attention Span Cinema
(1994) (500505), 6.00 Muriel's Wedding (1994)
(203075), 6.00 Kama Sutra: A Tale of
Love (1996) (553863), 6.00 Matador
(1998) (765930), 1.45 The Tit and the
Moon (1989) (485552), 3.00 My Own Private
Island (1991) (235785), 4.50 - 6.00
The Firm's Bell (1998) (730303).

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
4.00 Rex Hunts Fishing World (197278),
4.30 Walker's World (199818), 5.00 Fight
Deck (276547), 5.30 Ancient Warriors
(199818), 6.00 Animal Doctor (197278),
6.30 Cheesha: the Winning Streak (Wild
Discovery) (1987568), 7.30 Beyond 2000
(1997991), 8.00 The Best of Discovery:
HMS Pandora - In the Wake of the Bounty
(197348), 9.00 Crocodile Hunts
(199818), 10.00 Real Live: Shops and
Robbers (199818), 11.00 Weapons of War

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND
As BBC1 London excepts 6.30
Newsline (6.30, 9.30, 1.30, 7.30 -
the Comedy (1993094), 10.05 Dangerfield
(194278), 10.55 Film: Enter the Dragon
(1818818), 12.30 The Stand-Up Show
(199388), 1.00 BBC News 24 (1006788).

BBC1 SCOTLAND
As BBC1 London excepts 12.25
As BBC1 London (1993094), 12.30
No Laughing Place (1993094), 12.35
An T-Oileann Sealladair (1984803), 2.05
Boris Gorbachev Classic (191617), 3.00
Wipeout (1993094), 6.00 News (67,
6.30 Reporting Scotland: Weather (1993),
10.50 Friday SportsScene (1993094),
10.50 Boris Gorbachev Classic (191617),
11.50 The Stand-Up Show (199388),
12.00 Film: Enter the Dragon (199388),
2.00 John BBC News 24 (1006788).

BBC1 WALES
As BBC1 London excepts 6.30
Wales Today (6.30, 10.20) Peter Karrie
Unravelled (1993094), 10.50 Film: Enter the
Dragon (199388), 12.30 Stand-Up
Show (199388), 1.00 Film: Black Eagle
(199388), 2.35 BBC News 24 (1006788).

ANGLIA
As Carlton excepts 12.20 Anglia
News and Weather (199388), 1.00 Sky
Sports 1 (199388), 1.30 Sky Sports 2
(199388), 2.00 Sky Sports 3 (199388),
2.30 Sky Sports 4 (199388), 3.00 Sky
Sports 5 (199388), 3.30 Sky Sports 6
(199388), 4.00 Sky Sports 7 (199388),
4.30 Sky Sports 8 (199388), 5.00 Sky
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6.30 Sky Sports 12 (199388), 7.00 Sky
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8.30 Sky Sports 16 (199388), 9.00 Sky
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Sports 173 (199388), 3.3

